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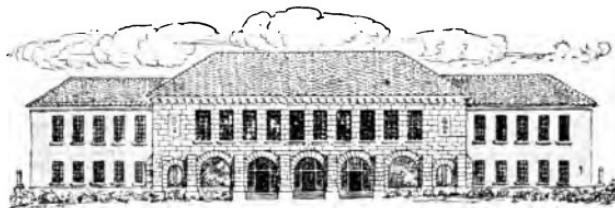
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# Riverside Educational Monographs

EDITED BY HENRY SUZALLO  
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## HISTORY IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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## **EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION**

HISTORY is social experience. In so far as it is the experience of a single nation, it consists of the adventures of many generations of ancestors living in a continuous group. We care to know and remember it primarily because it explains what we are and what we are going to be. It is the record of the situations which have permitted and limited our aspirations; it is the accounting of our social failures and successes; it is the story of the evolution of the institutional instruments with which we now control our social life. From it we have taken all our social courages and cautions. It is our book of national lessons in which we search for experience to solve the future.

Timid of the responsibilities which are inevitable in this view of history teaching, and tinged by an academic indifference to everything save impersonal perception of the truth, many of our most respectable and mature historical teachers have disavowed the practical purposes of history. The error of such a disavowal is not grievous in the universities. There the impersonal search for truth is a major business, and the students

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taught are so mature and highly selected that the scientific teaching of history largely fulfills the needs of the situation. It is when these attitudes and methods descend to the classrooms of high and elementary schools that we perceive their inadequacy and begin to realize that a merely scientific aim must be supplemented by practical, social, and civic objectives, and that methods of instruction must be so devised as to make the important events of other generations vital and appealing to the individuals of this. In no other way can the really significant truths of history be individualized and made a common group possession.

Of course it is absolutely necessary that the scientific historian shall discover by a rigid method what our social past has really been. The disentanglement of truths from myths is a serious task and must be accomplished relentlessly. But the acceptance of this obligation does not by any means complete the duty of historians as a class. Since ordinary men cannot and will not know all that historians do, it is necessary to choose that which is the more significant in the interpretation of the historic currents which have swept us into our present and will sweep us on to our future.

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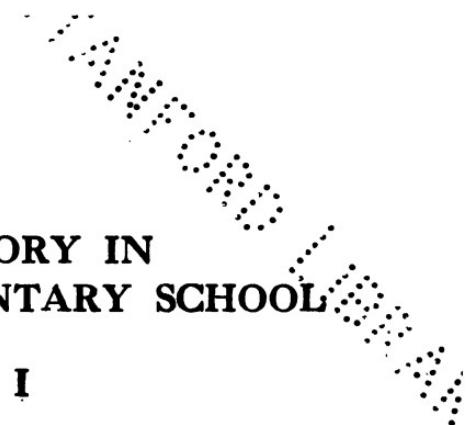
Once in possession of the scientific facts of history, the historian who would make his truths vital in the transmission must pick and reject, emphasize and subordinate, according as the things known have greater or less social significance. Unfortunately, it is too frequently the case that the scientific historian does not readily turn conscious social historian. When he writes, as necessarily he does, he must determine sequences of topics and the relative space to be given each, and these decisions inevitably express his own measure of the worth of events — a measure more or less personal and only half reasoned out. Thus, some writers have emphasized military and political affairs, and others have stressed the economic and social aspects of history. The difference is due to a personal disagreement as to what is the more important knowledge for the man living now and in the future. Among all these variations in the treatment of national experience, the teacher must make his way to some definite choice of important facts. And a difficult path it is that leads to the solution of this first problem.

Once the web of history is re-spun for its experience or living worth, the teacher has another task, that of transmitting the same to the

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younger generation, so that the truths of the rational life clutch the personal life of the citizen as powerfully as experiences that have been directly won. This second is the pedagogical problem — the task of personalizing national experiences so widely among men that a national consciousness of mind arises from common possession.

In the solution of these two difficulties of the schoolmaster, this text will aid. It offers invaluable suggestions for making a functional choice of historic facts and develops in detail the tried and successful methods that will make the travails and lessons of national groups long since dead, vital and useful vicarious experiences to that growing citizen — the American youth.



## HISTORY IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### I

#### THE VALUE OF HISTORY IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*History explains the present*

"He who knows nothing of history," says Macaulay, "may be likened to a blind man who, passing through a wonderful gallery filled with beautiful pictures, sees none of them."

Perhaps it might be justly claimed that he who knows no history is hopelessly blind to the meaning of the world in which he lives. The child finds himself in a complex and mysterious civilization. He meets, daily, customs, institutions, ideas, words, whose significance he does not understand.

As science reveals to him the meaning of the physical phenomena around him, so the study of history explains to him the social problems that excite his curiosity.

## THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

The child is the eternal questioner. History answers some of his questions.

It is the history lesson that tells him why his town has a certain name; what is meant by the United States, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, etc.; why people go to different churches; why his father is a Republican or a Democrat; what happens on election day; why men cheer the flag. It is the history lesson that explains the other children in the classroom and their different ways of living — Italians, Russians, Germans. Newspaper headlines become intelligible through his knowledge of history and civics. The boy who said, "What's the use of studying history? It's all past," had not learned that history is the powerful acid that dissolves the complex elements of the world we live in into their true parts. By its aid we understand more clearly not only the past, but the ever-changing, confused present.

History stimulates intelligent patriotism. If the public school is the "melting-pot" in which we fuse the diverse and heterogeneous elements abounding in American life, then the study of American history is a most potent flame in this great process.

The little foreigner but recently arrived, who in broken English talks proudly of what "our

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Pilgrim Fathers done," has felt the magic of this flame.

History teaching, however, that gives merely a superficial, sentimental patriotism is both futile and dangerous. To salute the flag is easy; to be an intelligent citizen takes thought and time and involves some sacrifice.

The school celebrations on Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays, if they are worth anything to the child, should show him that the making of a nation is a difficult and laborious task, a task which is not yet finished.

He reads eagerly the story of the dark days, the cold nights, the suffering at Valley Forge, but the story should do more than arouse his love of the heroic. It should stir in him a feeling of love and gratitude toward Washington and the men who created this Republic regardless of pain and hardship.

This America has been given him by them to guard and cherish. It is a precious gift which he must preserve at any cost. Hundreds have lived bravely and died nobly that he may enjoy this priceless heritage; therefore the study of history should arouse in him an overwhelming sense of loyalty and duty to the nation, a desire for service that "neither doubts, nor counts the cost,

## THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

nor asks recognition," a service that means sacrifice, an Americanism worthy of the name.

*History develops the reasoning power and the balanced judgment*

While history kindles patriotism, when it is truthfully presented, it is also the best cure for a narrow provincialism, a provincialism which sees only one side to a question, that dislikes and sneers at all foreigners, that believes the false theory that "one's country is always in the right."

If it teaches anything, history teaches the balanced judgment. It is the remedy for the stupid partisanship which crushes independent reasoning and prevents reform.

The eighth-grade child who argues for the rights of the British Parliament during the Revolution, or presents the secession doctrine to his class, has learned to *think*, the chief end of education.

We consider that the ability to examine both sides of an argument, to pick out the truth while seeing the other man's point of view, is a rare gift among adult thinkers. Children in the upper elementary grades are perfectly capable of exercising this same reasoning power if they are properly trained to use their minds.

## **THE VALUE OF HISTORY**

But because of the banal and one-sided textbooks which are often presented to them, and the teacher's lack of interest or information, the average child emerges from his study of history with his reasoning powers utterly untouched, his viewpoint biased, his knowledge of the past vague and inaccurate.

As the vast majority of American children never reach the high school, they enter upon the business of life untrained in a kind of reasoning most valuable in daily affairs.

It has been said that knowledge of historical facts is not necessary for success in life. This is true, but the ability to think clearly, to understand that nothing happens without some cause, to realize that an important event like the Declaration of Independence or the invention of the steam engine affects our lives to-day, — all this is more than a mere knowledge of facts and will help the child in his struggle with life.

Biography is peculiarly powerful in developing the child's judgment.

The discovery that the great men of the past had faults like our faults, that they sometimes made mistakes, that we must judge them and their acts by the times in which they lived, arouses the child's interest and develops his reasoning faculty.

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He finds, that Washington owned slaves, that the Puritans were cruel and unjust to the Quakers, that John Hancock was arrested for smuggling, that Benedict Arnold was a brave soldier and saved the day at Saratoga. What should he think about these matters?

The very effort to think about them at all is excellent mental discipline. When the child studies carefully the life of the past in order to understand the action of the hero, he not only gains information, he cultivates his judgment.

But the child will never develop mentally by the mere memorizing of historical facts. The stimulation of his reasoning power must be obtained by methods that lead to thoughtful study, class discussion, and definite expression.

*History stimulates the imagination and interests  
the child in historical reading*

With the exception of literature no subject so excites the imagination and carries the student into a world of fascinating adventure and excitement as history. The history story is like a magic carpet that bears the child away from the daily prosaic life of home and school into a land of eternal romance.

From the time he meets the Indians in the

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first grade and enjoys their delightful company, or travels with Daniel Boone across the Kentucky mountains, holds the bridge with Horatius, attends a tournament with Richard the Lion-Hearted, paddles down the Mississippi with Marquette, until he steams up the Hudson with Fulton, he is the comrade of great adventurers, the interested spectator of great deeds.

Not only does history appeal to the child's imagination and love of romance, but it is part of his educational equipment. He meets the historical figure in literature, in the art museums, in allusions in the newspapers, in plays at the theater, even in moving-picture shows; if he knows nothing about these personages or the part they played in life, he has been cheated out of his natural heritage.

Standing on the steps of the noble statue of Joan of Arc recently erected on Riverside Drive in New York City, a little Italian girl told in charming English to a group of East Side children the great story of the French maid. She had learned it all in school, the moving tale and the language in which she told it. The children touched the stone with reverent little fingers and went home the richer for their vision of bravery and sacrifice. The history story had indeed justi-

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fied itself. Children whose imagination and interest are developed along the lines of historical reading have found a treasure house to which they can resort in later days. The historical novel, the books of the great historians, biography, and travel are resources which never fail them in after life. The taste for such reading may be taught and cultivated in the elementary school.

### *History as a guide to conduct*

That the study of history explains much in our present-day life, that it teaches patriotism, develops the judgment and the reasoning power, stirs and delights the imagination, and is a source of pleasure in later years are results that nearly all teachers are willing to acknowledge; but that history study enables us to decide the problems of life or is in any way a guide to conduct is perhaps less easily proved.

The moral and the ethical elements, however, are strongly visible in many of the history stories we teach in school. The beauty of sacrifice, the evil results of selfishness, the wickedness of tyranny and cruelty, the hatefulness of hypocrisy and the nobility of patience, courage, and honesty are emphasized again and again in the history books as they are in human life. The story

## THE VALUE OF HISTORY

of Nathan Hale, the words of Lincoln, the attitude of Lee after the Civil War, are in themselves sermons by the way.

When we add to this the balanced judgment and the developed sense of cause and result that history properly taught in the higher elementary grades will produce, one may venture to assert that the study of history, while it may not always determine the conduct of a child, at least sets before him an ethical standard, a moral ideal that makes for righteousness and good citizenship.

## II

### THE HISTORY STORY IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

#### *The oral history story*

THE child's first knowledge of history comes through the lips of his teacher. It is the oral history story that he hears at first in the lower grades.

From his teacher he learns of primitive peoples, of the Indians and their fascinating life. He listens to great adventure stories and the biographies of heroes. These stories appeal to his imagination because they are pictorial and dramatic in form.

How should the teacher present the oral history story successfully?

The first requirement is *enthusiasm*. The teacher must desire to make the story alive and interesting. She must determine to put herself into the story. She must really enjoy telling it. If she succeeds in feeling the story, she will create an atmosphere of reality that affects her voice, her gestures, her presentation of the material. The children respond at once to this mental attitude. The story is immediately real and convincing and it holds their interest and attention.

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The second requirement is *adequate preparation*. The teacher should know thoroughly the historical material from which the story is to be made. The child should feel that the teacher speaks from "some inexhaustible source of knowledge." The hasty reading of a primary history will not give sufficient background. The more the teacher knows about the subject, the more skillful she will be in translating it into primary language.

The third step is the *outline*, the *arrangement of the facts in logical sequence*. The teacher uses here her dramatic sense, eliminates unessential details, puts in the picturesque or vital event, and if possible arranges the story so that a climax may be secured.

Lastly, the story outline must *be clothed in the teacher's own words*.

These words are very important, for the story must be told in language the child clearly understands.

New and difficult words should be written on the board and explained when they are used. Children enjoy knowing new words, but become confused and lose interest when the story is told in language above their heads.

On the other hand, the use of good English

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is absolutely essential. Slang, commonplace expressions, localisms, and poor grammatical forms stand out painfully and react on the children. In order to "talk down" to the children, it is not necessary to mutilate the English language.

In some history stories, a *question* skillfully inserted at intervals intensifies the interest. How do you suppose the Pilgrims felt when Samoset appeared? Why do you think the Pilgrims were wise to ask the Indians to their Thanksgiving dinner? How many do you think went back when the Mayflower sailed for home? Such questions make the children think. The story grows more real as the tale advances. The introduction of questioning into a story depends on the nature of the material. Sometimes it would break the continuity of the narrative and destroy the effect of the story. The life of Lincoln, for example, when first told in the primary grades should be told as a whole.

One of the most essential features in primary history stories is the *personal* element. Children do not understand or care about the general or abstract. For instance, in teaching the life of the colonial children, weave the story around the adventures of some particular hero or heroine. The class will be more interested in the various

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experiences of Little Hans who lived in old Hoboken or Old Manhattan than they will be in a descriptive talk on the way the Dutch children lived long ago. Many of the writers of the primary history readers recognize this fact and the history material is presented in fictional form. We have "Priscilla's Day in School," instead of "How Our Grandmothers Went to School."

This is especially true in teaching the Indian work used so largely in the first and second grades. The teacher should read enough to obtain a necessary knowledge of the facts. She then conveys this information by a fascinating series of little tales about some imaginary Indian child hero or heroine. Through the medium of the story she teaches much about Indian life, the wigwam, the family affairs, play, work, journeys, etc. The Hiawatha stories use the same method in poetic form.

When a primary history reader is used instead of the oral story, the teacher must still be able to supplement the book with her own personal story-telling power.

The mere reading of the history story in class by the children is not sufficient. To make the work effective the teacher must vitalize the book. She must know more about the story than the

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book gives. A little outside reading will help her to reinforce the book and give color to the narrative. By questioning during the reading lesson or at its close she can bring out the essentials of the story.

Some interesting story material for the primary grades would be stories of the Vikings, the story of Robin Hood and his times, the story of Columbus, Indian stories of all types including the Cliff-Dwellers; the story of John Smith and old Virginia, the Pilgrim story, the story of William Penn and his city, old Dutch stories, the story of Daniel Boone, and of the boyhood life of Washington and Lincoln.

All primary history stories should be illuminated by the use of illustrative material, dramatization, exercises in English composition, and various devices. The use of illustrative material, pictures, sand tables, manual work, methods of dramatization and review are discussed as special topics later in this book.

### **III**

#### **THE BIOGRAPHICAL STORY IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES**

As the story is the child's doorway to any historical knowledge in the primary years, so it remains the entrance to his knowledge of the past in the intermediate grades.

The story here, however, becomes definite biography. It ceases to be the telling of some disconnected dramatic incident and presents the color and atmosphere of a past period through the biography of some heroic or famous figure whose career portrays the life of his time.

Instead of the story of the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving Day, for instance, we give the life of William Bradford or Miles Standish or Roger Williams. The narrative brings in the English background from which the Puritan sprang. It describes conditions in America in much more detail and shows the character of the men who laid the foundations of New England.

All intermediate biography should have certain definite aims in its presentation.

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First, it must appeal to the heroic and dramatic element which is so strongly developed in the child in the fifth and sixth grades. The stories studied must, therefore, be interesting in themselves and should be simply and vividly told.

Secondly, it should, through the medium of the story, bring out the character of some especial period or the life of some particular epoch. The story of Peter Stuyvesant is an example of a biography which conveys much excellent colonial history. His life shows old Dutch days in New York, its quaint customs and traditions. It tells also of the Swedes and their homes on the Delaware. The story is carried on to the changes under English rule, and the child sees New York emerging from New Amsterdam. All this history may be taught in a very interesting fashion as part of the entertaining biography of the hot-headed, sturdy old Dutch Governor.

Thirdly, the biography used should have some chronological sequence or some definite developing idea or unifying thought. A mere heterogeneous collection of tales without any motive or definite order leaves a vague and disconnected impression on the child's mind. If he reads the life of Robert Fulton one day, then takes up the

## THE BIOGRAPHICAL STORY

exploits of George Rogers Clark for the next lesson, he races mentally back and forth across the historical field and loses all sense of true development. But if he takes, for example, a group of inventors, Eli Whitney, Robert Fulton, Samuel Morse, and Thomas Edison, the study of these stories is the study of one great phase of American history.

Fourthly, sixth-grade biography should prepare the way for the connected textbook study of history in the higher elementary grades. Modern educators generally favor the use of European hero stories in this grade as a natural and proper background for the American history which is to follow. The European stories are interesting and contain much that is vivid and dramatic. They reveal a civilization especially appealing to children of this age. Above all they explain to the American of the present the meaning of the history he is to study. American history did not begin in 1492, and the European story work shows the boy or girl the world from which the first Americans came. They describe his ancestors and their life in Europe and widen his conception of the past.

If the European biographies are used, they should be carefully selected and should touch

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only on certain high lights in the historical past.

The story of Leonidas teaches the stern patriotism of the ancient Spartan. The glory and beauty of Athens are seen in the life of Themistocles.

A day at the Olympic games reveals the splendor of old Greece. The out-of-door life, the open-air plays, the great athletic contests are all deeply interesting to children.

The story of Julius Cæsar will give a glimpse of one of the world's greatest men and also a picture of the wonderful Roman civilization of his day.

Medieval life may be shown by various group stories, such as tales of William the Conqueror, of Joan of Arc, King Alfred, King Richard the Lion-Hearted, Frederick Barbarossa, Robert Bruce, etc.

The stories present splendid and exciting figures, whose names should be known to every child. Through these heroes he meets crusaders and monks, peasants and princes. He should not only learn of the life in the castles and manors, but he should become somewhat acquainted with medieval industrial life. He should be introduced to the labor gilds, so like our labor unions, and

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to the great fairs where one did one's shopping for the year.

The Renaissance, which is the ground floor of all American history, may be shown by the lives of persons like Marco Polo, John of Guttenberg, Queen Elizabeth, and Sir Walter Raleigh. Here the stories emphasize the changed conditions in Europe. We see new ideas, new inventions, new methods of travel, new desires for trade, and the boy or girl understands Vasco da Gama and Columbus.

There are many books of hero stories or biographical sketches in use in the intermediate grades. Few of these possess any developing idea. The teacher can use them successfully, however, by arranging the stories in groups according to her own plan or by supplementing the material given by outside material from other books. If the children have access to a public library, or have any reference library in school, they can find new anecdotes or information about the character they are studying and add to the interest of the class.

After the story has been read and studied carefully, it may often be dramatized for review work; the class may arrange the scenes and choose the characters. Such a story as the life of Marco

## THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

Polo lends itself delightfully to sixth-grade drama, or, for that matter, any hero story which is adapted to intermediate grade work is capable of dramatic interpretation. Further discussion of this method will be found under the topic Dramatization.

Interesting games may be invented for review devices after a class has studied a number of biographies. Such a game as "Who am I?" is an illustration of this method. One child leaves the room and the class decide what character he is to personify. Upon his return they skillfully question him as to his identity. The more he knows about the past material he has been reading, the quicker he is able to guess who he is supposed to represent. Biographical story work may be illustrated by pictures which the children can collect, by blackboard drawing, by English theme work in novel or interesting form; as, "Imagine you were living in Boonesboro with Daniel Boone. Describe a day's experience there"; or, "Write a page or two pretending it is the diary of Robert Morris and that he is trying to raise money for the army in Philadelphia in 1777"; or, if the subject-matter be European history, "Imagine you were dining with Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest. Describe the scene"; or,

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**"You saw Queen Elizabeth knight Sir Walter Raleigh. Write an account of the event."**

Variety in review and a unified plan in teaching biography in the intermediate grades will make this work vigorous, valuable, and extremely interesting.

## **IV**

### **THE USE OF THE HISTORY TEXTBOOK**

THE serious study of history in the elementary schools is necessarily from a textbook. Whatever of definite knowledge is possessed by the child who leaves the upper elementary grades to enter the high school, or to begin his life in the world, has been derived from his study of a textbook.

Ignorance of the use of this book is, however, most common in our schools. "I studied a red book," "My history book had a brown cover," is the only knowledge the child possesses after a year or even two years' intimate acquaintance with a textbook. He does not know the author, the title of the book, or the method used in writing it. He has never used any of its suggestions or very carefully examined its maps or pictures.

When a child begins the study of a new textbook some time should be given to a careful examination of its contents. The title and the author's name should be learned. Such ques-

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tions may be asked as, "Who wrote this book?" "What do we know about him?" "Who are the publishers?" "What are copyright laws?" etc.

The preface should be read aloud. The children can usually understand it and they can explain the author's aims to the class in their own words. The table of contents should be carefully looked over. How has the subject been arranged? What names are given to the great periods of history? Why were these names used? A class can discuss the meaning of a period of history most profitably. American history lends itself especially well to this discussion. An eighth grade will enjoy investigating the question, "Did the colonial period end with the Revolutionary War or at some later date?"

The examination of the textbook should bring out the use of the index and the helps in pronunciation the book offers. Too many children depend on the teacher to pronounce for them all new or difficult words. They can learn easily how to use the pronouncing index and are generally proud of their mastery over hard or difficult names.

Interesting material in the appendix should be noticed. Does the book contain any great documents, as the Declaration of Independence or the

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Constitution? Why should these documents be in the book? Pictures and maps should be examined and their uses discussed. More intensive study of this material will come in the later lessons. The value of the footnotes should be emphasized. Some children have apparently never been taught to read a footnote in any book. The suggestions for review work, questions, outside reference readings, composition subjects which the book makes should be noted and their value discussed.

One chapter might be read to show the way the author looks at the subject, the kind of words he uses, the topics he considers important.

This serious introduction gives a class a respect for and an interest in the textbook which they never feel when the book is merely a source of superficial knowledge, so many pages of "stuff" to be carelessly read each day.

The amount of labor and thought that goes to the making of a book is revealed to the child. The subject as well as the book appears to him in a broader, deeper, more significant light. The book becomes an instrument that he has learned to use for his own benefit, and he enjoys his personal mastery of its contents and its possibilities.

# V

## THE ASSIGNMENT OF THE LESSON

THE teacher who says hastily as the bell rings for the close of the recitation, "Take the next six pages, or study half the next chapter," has failed in her method of presentation and lost an opportunity to vitalize the next day's lesson.

The assignment of the next lesson is really the fundamental part of the daily work and is especially important in the elementary grades.

Some of the faults in lesson assignment which teachers often find it difficult to overcome are: —

- a. Lack of sufficient time for an adequate study of the advance work.
- b. Careless, indefinite, or hastily worded assignments.
- c. Failure to emphasize essential points or special difficulties in the new material.
- d. No participation by the class in the lesson assignment.

So important is the lesson assignment that some successful teachers use a third of the time of the recitation period in preparation for the

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next lesson. Whether the beginning or end of the period be used for the lesson assignment depends on the subject-matter of the lesson.

Ordinarily, the beginning of the class period seems the natural time for this work. There is less sense of hurry. The class and the teacher are both free from the strain and excitement of the lesson and are able clearly to examine the new material. It is practically impossible to stop an interesting lesson before its climax has been reached, merely to discuss the next day's work. In general, therefore, teachers find the beginning of the period the better time.

However, when the new material requires the day's lesson to be clearly understood, it is wiser to discuss the advance at the close of the period, but the teacher should see to it that sufficient time be given fully to consider the new work.

As the history lesson is taught topically the subject-matter falls in natural sequences. The children may be trained to decide by examination of the textbook how far the next lesson should properly extend. For illustration, if the lesson is to be the Bank question in the Administration of Andrew Jackson, the class will see that the subject extends into the Administration of Van Buren, and a logical assignment of material will

## ASSIGNMENT OF THE LESSON

be made; or if the lesson be on the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the children will realize the necessity of studying the results of the Act and will add the civil war in Kansas to the lesson as part of the topic for the day.

The teacher may suggest questions or problems whose answers lie in the next day's lesson, thus arousing interest in the solution of these unknown topics.

Sometimes the assignment may take the class into material in other parts of the book. After studying the Monroe Doctrine, a class may look up the various applications of the Doctrine in the later history. This will involve a study of the index and other parts of the book, or the use of reference material. Children enjoy these mental excursions and gain power in handling and developing a topic.

In talking over the next lesson with a class the children may suggest from their own examination of the text special points to be studied. If a map is in the lesson, what use shall be made of it? What do the pictures mean? Why are they used? What special references are to be read?

This is the time to arrange for various class exercises or devices or special topic work, to answer questions and explain difficulties.

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The statement of all requirements either to the class or to individual pupils should be very clearly made. All teachers know by experience how slow some children are in grasping a new thought or carrying out a new idea. The teacher must therefore be very definite in her language and explanations, and especially so when dealing with a new method or giving new information.

The children should be required later to state what the lesson is and show why it was assigned in this manner.

Lesson assignments of this character, instead of being perfunctory and mechanical commands issued by the teacher and received by the pupils with resentment or indifference, become interesting exercises in the day's work in which all participate and all enjoy.

## VI

### THE STUDY RECITATION

#### *Teaching the child to study*

ONE of the universal problems the teacher meets in her work is the inability of the average child to study a lesson and recite clearly and definitely upon it. "I read the lesson over five times"; "I studied for two hours on that lesson"; "I thought I knew it" — these are daily comments one hears from pupils who have failed in the day's work. These excuses are usually sincere. The pupil has tried to learn the lesson. He has made a definite mental effort, but he has failed because he did not know how to attack the problem. This difficulty is by no means confined to children in the elementary school. It is apparent in every high-school class, and many students graduate from the universities who do not know how to study.

Therefore the sooner the boy or girl in the elementary school is taught to study, the better for his future career.

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The most serious difficulties in studying a history lesson are usually caused by:—

- a. No real comprehension of the meaning of the words of the text or reference book.
- b. Lack of attention or concentration when reading.
- c. Lack of analyzing power, no ability to pick out the important events or topics in a lesson.
- d. Inability to see the relationship of cause and effect in a subject.
- e. Bad memorizing habits, the result of poor teaching.
- f. Tendency to depend on the teacher to explain the lesson in class.

How little children really understand of the meaning of the text they are reading is often startling to the teacher when the test is made. The pupil reads the words glibly enough, but when forced to explain them reveals an ignorance that is astonishing. A bright girl in an eighth grade recently recited fluently on the use of the "underground railway" by fugitive slaves. An accidental phrase, however, showed that she thought the "railway" was an underground subway actually existing in the earth. Examination of the class discovered a third of the pupils

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who held the same opinion. The boy who asked, "Why do they always send clergymen to foreign countries?" when discussing the "X. Y. Z." affair had simply never grasped the various meanings attached to the word "minister." These mistakes were most natural ones.

The failure to understand words and phrases used in the books deadens interest and muddles the child's point of view. Many of the old textbooks were written in a style and with a vocabulary that "darkened counsel" as far as the child was concerned. Even if trained to seek refuge in the dictionary when in trouble, the narrative had no power to hold his attention. The dull and difficult language wearied and disgusted him. Our modern elementary-school books are written with a simplicity of language, a vigor and charm that have greatly lessened this difficulty. The teacher should carefully attack this problem, however, and obtain for her class the most interesting and the best written textbook if she is fortunate enough to have a voice in the selection of books.

Children naturally find it difficult to concentrate. The incidents of the classroom or affairs at home are more exciting than the story in the book. They read with their lips, but do not "in-

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wardly digest" the material. Children have to be trained to concentrate as they are trained to add or multiply. The careful reading of the text twice with every faculty alert is worth more than reading it five times in the fashion so often used in school.

That children do not discriminate in studying a lesson between the important and the unessential is the result of a lack of real comprehension of the subject. A child is asked the cause of the Revolution. He will give an account of the Boston Tea Party, the one dramatic little incident meaning more to him than the abstract discussion of the British system of taxation. It is only after he understands the whole situation clearly that his mind works logically and he is able to see the larger event from the smaller or trace the relationship we call "cause and effect."

The eagerness with which a child will tell a story or anecdote he has found in the text, instead of knowing the really vital material in the lesson, sometimes discourages the teacher. But the use of the outline, the effect of the study recitation, help discrimination, and a child gradually learns this power through daily thought and practice.

It is scarcely necessary to discuss the fatal

## THE STUDY RECITATION

result on the child's mind of the purely memorizing habit. The old idea of studying a history lesson by learning verbally so many paragraphs in the textbook has become extinct in all well-taught schools. There are some poems, quotations, dates, selections from documents that he should know "by heart," but the failure of mere verbal knowledge of the words of a book to develop thought or personal expression needs no demonstration.

If, then, the question of studying the lesson successfully be such a difficult one, how shall the busy elementary teacher meet the problem? The *study recitation* is a helpful method which can be used in any grade. The child prepares the work with the teacher, the teacher controlling and directing his study.

A study recitation conducted in a higher elementary grade begins with a silent reading of the text. The presence of the teacher creates concentration and forces attention. After the class has read over the material, she can test them on their comprehension of the words. Paragraphs may be read aloud and their meaning explained by the members of the class. Words and phrases not understood absolutely should be made clear by the use of the dictionary and the blackboard.

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Then comes the training in the development of the thought. The teacher may question, the class using the open book. What are the most important paragraphs? Why? What events should be especially studied? What events in the lesson are connected with one another; with events which we have studied about before? etc.

The children should prove to their own satisfaction that their answers are correct.

Geographical allusions should be looked up. In ordinary study a pupil will read the word "Omaha" in the text. He has a hazy idea of its location, but he does not take the trouble to find it on the map. When the recitation comes he is unable to discover the city. The study recitation teaches him that geography is part of the regular lesson.

If reference reading is in the assignment, the selections may be read aloud by different members of the class and their use discussed. A poem or piece of fiction may be given by the class to one of its members for special study. He may report on this later or recite it during the regular recitation. Finally an outline should be placed on the board, the class deciding what the topic heads shall be. If dates are necessary they should be chosen by the class after discussion and learned.

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Of course different devices or different exercises may be used adapted to the varying needs of the different children. In order to train children in concentration a good exercise is to give a certain amount of time for silent reading and then have the children place on the board, or be able to talk about, the essential topics they have discovered in the lesson.

Some pupils will do much more than others in a given time. The teacher can then help the slower children, show them how to read a paragraph and get from it the vital thought.

The elementary teacher with the crowded schedule will ask how she is to find time for work like this. How often should the study recitation take place? What should be done about home study? etc.

Teaching the child how to study is really the most important part of the teacher's work. When a class is beginning to study seriously from books, these study recitations should take place as often as the teacher feels they are necessary. Use them even if some of the "book knowledge" must be sacrificed and if some of the recitation time be omitted. The child who has learned to study will assimilate material much more rapidly than other children and little time will be lost in the end.

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Until a child has been taught to study his history lesson properly, home study is often a farce, and it is wiser to have him do work of a different character at home, the history lesson being learned in school.

When he has grasped the essentials, the teacher may help him in his home study by certain exercises which can be given out when the lesson is assigned. For instance, if the lesson be on the settlement of New Jersey, the teacher may ask the child to bring in a little diagram or drawing showing the different persons who ruled the colony and the kinds of government they established. The material on New Jersey in the textbook is usually brief and uninteresting. The effort to make a little drawing or diagram at home that will represent New Jersey's past history will force the child to concentrate on the text. He will pick it out topically and in making his drawing he will learn the lesson.

Outlines made at home from the text are helpful in teaching children to study. Composition work is useful when the subject-matter has to be found from several books.

The teacher must, of course, guard against too difficult exercises or too long assignments. The process of teaching children to study is a difficult

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one, but it is eminently worth while. It is a wise arrangement of time to shorten the period of "hearing" the lesson recited and introduce more definite and intelligent instruction on how to study the lesson.

If results are often disheartening and development in this line seems slow and irregular, the teacher must not be discouraged. Do not expect too much at first, but believe that effort in this direction is the foundation of education.

## VII

### THE USE OF OUTSIDE READING

IN the children's reading-room of a city library not long ago, a ragged little boy inquired for a book "about Robin Hood and King John." He went away happy with Howard Pyle's classic under his arm. A moment or two later another boy whose face and accent showed his foreign parentage demanded the Life of Napoleon. He was followed by a little girl who wanted to see a picture of Queen Elizabeth: "A colored one, please, to show my class."

The librarian in charge said with a smile to an interested observer: "It is wonderful how much history they read. The schools do it, you see." Surely no finer tribute could have been paid those schools. They were giving their pupils the reading habit which means knowledge, pleasure, and lifelong inspiration.

Outside reading should be a vital factor in all history work in the elementary school as well as in the high school. It gives the child a different point of view from the textbook and educates

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him in thinking for himself. The boy or girl who is able to explain an allusion in the lesson from his reference reading, or even to criticize the statements of the textbook, has developed his judgment and mental power. Reference reading also teaches the practical use of libraries, indexes, card catalogues, and bibliographies.

Although it is impossible to do all the reading suggested by many textbook authors, some of it should be surely done if the books can be procured. The class who uses one textbook only and has never attempted any reference work has lost many delightful moments.

The arrangement of recommended readings may be classified under: (1) Source books; (2) general, simple works covering the whole field; (3) the fuller histories; (4) the standard histories; (5) books on special topics; (6) biography; (7) poetry; (8) fiction.

*Source readings*, or selections from material written by persons at the time of an event, are often considered too difficult for elementary-grade work and few teachers use them.

There are source readings, however, which pupils in the seventh or eighth, or even the sixth, grade can thoroughly understand and enjoy. Nothing so illuminates and makes real the past

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as a good source selection. After reading "At Washington's Headquarters," a description of a dinner at Morristown with the General written by a French officer, a little girl said eagerly: "Just think of Washington sitting at the table eating nuts and making jokes for two hours. It makes him so alive."

An eighth-grade boy read aloud Dickens's account of his journey on one of the early Potomac steamboats, and the class laughed heartily over the clever satire and the crude conditions so humorously portrayed. Dr. Waldo's description of his life at Valley Forge, the smoky cakes cooked out-of-doors, the bitter cold, and the way he darned his stockings, impress the historic scene on the children far more forcibly than the most eloquent paragraph in the textbook.

Even the old English and quaint spelling of some sources are not impossible for children if they are carefully explained. Parts of the so-called "Diary of Columbus," Marquette's account of his voyage down the Mississippi, or Juet's "Discovery of the Hudson," are usable examples of sources that make the past "alive." Such a book as Hart's *Source Book of American History*, from which these illustrations are drawn, is invaluable in teaching American history.

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In lower grades studying European hero stories some sources can be used occasionally. The children enjoy reading parts of the *Odyssey* or Plutarch's *Lives* and many of the folk-lore stories. The correlation of history with literature is here especially possible and delightful.

The teacher should never use sources that her pupils cannot thoroughly comprehend and discuss. A good textbook generally suggests source readings which are practical, but the teacher should examine every selection before it is assigned to the class.

Even if a teacher finds it difficult to procure or use the sources, she can certainly provide the class with several copies of different *textbooks*. The children can use these books for daily reference and read over the lesson in them. They soon learn to compare statements and points of view, and the class discussion is broadened and brightened. In using these other texts, they should know titles and authors and be able to pick out the strong points of the different books. They develop the critical faculty rapidly and will soon say that one book "has better descriptions in it," another more interesting pictures, or a third is "easy to understand," etc. This comparative study is valuable and interesting,

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and the children are especially happy when they are able to correct a statement or present another explanation of an event from the one advanced by their one textbook.

In the use of the *larger histories or biographies*, the teacher may arouse the class interest by reading aloud some vivid or well-written description of a historical scene from an author like Parkman, Winsor, Fiske, Elson, or Rhodes. They will enjoy the color and detail and unconsciously the style.

The teacher may talk about the book and the author, and later other selections may be occasionally read by various members of the class. Even if the majority of the children read but a few pages in these books, they are introduced to the great writers and know their names and realize their power.

In presenting special topics to the class, the child who gives the topic should do some reference work. When he presents it, he should state the names of the authors he has read, the book or books used. This trains both the speaker and the class in estimating the value of authority. The bright little twelve-year-old who, when the class disputed his statements about the battle of Saratoga, answered proudly, "John Fiske says so

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and he ought to know," had confidence in his own research work.

In the great field of *fiction* and *poetry* there are unlimited treasures for the child. Some famous historical stories, such as *The Man Without a Country*, *The Perfect Tribute*, Page's *Two Little Confederates*, should be read by every elementary-school pupil. *Paul Revere's Ride*, *The Song of Marion's Men*, *Captain, My Captain*, *The Blue and the Gray*, the closing lines of Lowell's *Commemoration Ode*, are well-known examples of historical poems that should be familiar to every class.

The story or the poem should be introduced as part of the lesson and should be associated with the person or event it commemorates. Many of these selections are used for recitations on special days or in school celebrations; nevertheless, it does not hurt to repeat them, and their presentation in the class recitation enlivens and varies the class period.

One form of outside reference work which should be cultivated when the material is within the reach of the class is the *magazine* or *newspaper* reference. Interesting pictures, short articles on historical subjects which appear in the good magazines or Sunday editions of the newspapers,

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are often useful and interesting to the children. In some communities pupils in the higher elementary grades are able to contribute a good deal of such material. It should be placed on the bulletin board and discussed in the class recitation.

In using the newspaper and magazine articles, however, teach the children to ask the question, "Is it true?" While many articles are valuable and enjoyable, the idea that whatever is printed is true should be carefully eradicated from the child's mind.

Children are, of course, unable to estimate the truth or falsity of statements in a newspaper, but they can be shown by references to textbooks or authentic histories how information may be tested. The teacher should prove to a boy who brings an inaccurate or sensational article to class how worthless such material really is. No lesson is more valuable than this. Many of the superficial judgments and ignorant prejudices we find among adult thinkers are born of credulity and careless newspaper reading. If the history lesson teaches the child early in life to weigh evidence before he accepts a statement, it has justified its place in the educational curriculum.

Teachers in country schools or in towns pos-

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sessing no public library may acknowledge the value of outside reading, but find themselves very scantily supplied with necessary books.

By giving a few school or class entertainments a little money may be raised for a library, and fifteen or twenty dollars carefully expended will give much pleasure to a class. This library should be in the classroom on open shelves accessible to all the children. Many a restless boy or whispering girl would be less of a problem to the teacher if some interesting books were in the room which they could use freely in study periods. If the books are easy of access, the pupils will read much more than the assigned work.

If the teacher uses a city or town library, books for the classroom may be obtained at a loan library and kept for a certain time by permission of the library authorities. Many city libraries are most helpful assistants in history teaching and will supply pictures, maps, and excellent illustrative material when asked for aid.

The teacher should show her class how to use the library itself. She can explain how card catalogues are used, how the books are to be asked for, how books must be cared for. She should visit the library with the children and demonstrate the method to them.

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While the familiar, daily use of a large city library is very valuable to a group of children, the intimate, intensive effect of the small classroom bookshelf is often more practical and vital in its results.

Elementary-school teachers are very busy persons and have little time for much personal outside reading; but the teacher who desires to bring charm and power to her work must refresh herself at the sources of inspiration. She must know more than the textbook, whatever grade she teaches.

In order to assign reference reading properly or interest the children in books, she must herself be a lover of "noble words." The occasional reading of a good historical novel, a chapter from a good history, the newspaper and the magazine will give her the refreshment, the mental outlook, the vision that means success in teaching.

## VIII

### THE RECITATION

THE recitation in history teaching is the time when the child expresses his own conception of the knowledge he has gathered.

In the recitation he shows the results of his study, his power of assimilation, his ability to clothe his ideas in words, his sense of cause and effect and of the relationship of events.

The recitation should develop and broaden his outlook, correct his mistakes, suggest new lines of thought, create enthusiasm, and especially help him to express himself.

Too often the recitation is merely a mechanical device through which the teacher discovers whether the child has learned the information in a certain textbook. Even if the old-fashioned "parrot recitation" — i.e., children repeating literally the words or paragraphs in a book — has been discarded, the lesson is still conducted in a manner that offers little mental development to the pupil. The teacher asks questions, the children answer them as briefly as possible. The

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teacher sometimes talks or explains the principal topic in the lesson, the children taking very little part in the exercise, which really becomes a recitation by the teacher to the class.

The conduct of the recitation is therefore a practical problem in pedagogy whose successful solution demands the most careful preparation on the teacher's part. It means originality in questioning, variety in method, the power to arouse in the child his natural reasoning ability and his fondness for discussion. It must present knowledge as an organic whole, yet allow for the halting statements and the slow thought processes of the immature mind. The teacher must not do the work, yet on the other hand much outside information must necessarily come through the medium of the teacher.

How, then, is this balance to be preserved? How shall the recitation become a stimulant to the pupil? How teach him to work, how create in him a desire for self-expression, how help him to see the true values in the material he has studied?

No one method can be used absolutely or continuously. Different kinds of subject-matter need different treatmens, but certain suggestions may be helpful.

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Among the various types of recitations used in the elementary schools we find the question-and-answer recitation, the topical recitation, the class discussion of a subject, sometimes called the socialized recitation, and too often the teacher recitation or the recitation which is largely a lecture by the teacher to the class.

The *question-and-answer* recitation means that the teacher questions on the text or the assigned work and the pupils answer these questions. There are certain kinds of material where such a method is valuable and interesting, but the value depends upon the nature of the questions asked and the kind of answer that is accepted. Questions on the assigned text that ask only for facts in the book, or questions which follow the textbook topics, are of little real value. They carry no mental stimulus and cause no thought reaction. If the book states that the Alien and Sedition Laws in John Adams's Administration were very unpopular, the question, "What were the Alien and Sedition Laws?" or even, "Why were the Alien and Sedition Laws unpopular?" does not especially interest the child. The teacher is merely asking for facts, but if the question be asked, "Why is it said that now the Federalist Party committed suicide?" every child

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will be eager to express an opinion and the obnoxious laws will receive full attention.

Questions on the text should be as original as possible and should demand some thought on the pupil's part. The "yes-or-no" question, the question that suggests the answer, the vague question, the question stated in language the child does not fully understand, the question which uses the words of the book, should all be carefully avoided.

Questions that combine the facts in some new form, questions involving comparison, questions that link the present to the past, are all useful and interesting.

Such questions as, "Was the United States justified in declaring war against Mexico in 1846?" "Was the Fugitive Slave Law fair to the South?" "What did the Government learn from the panic of 1837?" "What steps were taken to settle the slavery question peaceably?" "Why were they not effective?" "Did the Western people favor nationalism or state sovereignty? Why?" "Why did people say in 1860, 'Oh, for one day of Andrew Jackson'?" are stimulating to children even if they answer them crudely and unsatisfactorily.

Definite drill questions must occasionally be

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asked, but usually the same results may be obtained by varying the form of the question so as to present the old idea in some novel or attractive guise.

The ability to frame desirable and worthwhile questions is a considerable art, but it is easily gained by practice, and teachers who possess this power enjoy the vigorous response it develops in a class.

The form in which the child answers the teacher's question is in itself a factor in education. Many teachers permit children to answer questions in monosyllables, or in short, fragmentary phrases. No effort is made to insist upon a clear and definite expression of the child's thought in sentence form. The pitiful scarcity of words that is so evident in the American vocabulary to-day has one of its sources in the meager answers and slip-shod expressions that are received by teachers in the schools.

Lincoln, Washington, Daniel Boone, or Henry Clay are all designated as "good men," every soldier is "brave," each event is said to be "important."

Some children apparently pass through their elementary-school career laden with less than a half-dozen adjectives as their rhetorical baggage

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for all recitations. They should be taught that it is as ridiculous to label historical personages with the same words as it would be to dress them all in the same costume.

The development of the answer requires constant vigilance and considerable hard work on the teacher's part. It is often easier to accept a few faltering words than to struggle with the shy, nervous, or stupid intelligence which has evoked them. However, the teacher who patiently insists upon the full or the thoughtful answer will be rewarded in time by the growth on the child's part of word power, and a sense of word discrimination and word values will be evident in his thinking.

The *topical recitation*, which is much used in the higher elementary grades, is well fitted to develop both thought and language. The topics may have been arranged by the children in an outline during a study recitation, or they may have been developed by the class recitation; they may have been studied at home or in school; but in order to recite upon them the child must exert himself mentally. He has first to find the necessary material; secondly, he must organize this so that he understands it; then he must be able to talk about it more or less fluently.

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This effort to bring together material separated by different paragraphs into a definite thought connection is valuable mental discipline.

When the boy who is studying the Missouri Compromise gathers under his topic heading, through his own independent work, the invention of the cotton gin, the Louisiana Purchase, and the migration to the West, he is really thinking. In his effort to relate these events and talk about them he develops a mental grasp on historical sequences which finds its outlet in some form of expression. He has something to say, therefore he is able to say it, and the teacher should urge him to discuss the topic as he has arranged it fully before the class and explain his thought connections and conclusions. The topical recitation has therefore developed the boy's logical ability, his knowledge of the relationship of events, and his power to use the English language.

The *special topic*, where the child examines facts for himself, usually from outside material, and then presents to his class what he has gained, is excellent practice in organization and power of expression.

Suppose the lesson touched on the "Open Door in China," in the McKinley Administration, the

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special topic discussed by some pupil might be China To-day. He would look up in newspapers and magazines present-day conditions in China and sketch these to his class in an interesting little talk. Such work illuminates and supplements the textbook and gives color to the recitation.

The special topic must, however, be chosen with care. The mere expansion of a textbook paragraph or the introduction of a few new details into the textbook story is not a true special topic. The pupil should offer a genuine contribution to the class. Either a new point of view of a familiar subject or new subject-matter.

In assigning special topics an interesting title will accentuate the value of the topic to the class; instead of a pupil's reciting on the life of John Marshall, the statement that, "John Marshall found the Constitution paper and made it power, found it a skeleton and clothed it with flesh and blood," will arouse class curiosity and the pupil who explains the quotation will find an interested audience. Such a topic as "the comparison of Washington's neutrality troubles with those of the present day" is not too difficult for an eighth grade and will greatly enliven the history of Washington's Administration.

When the class takes up the Monroe Doctrine,

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a special topic on the word "Pan-Americanism" would link the past and the present.

If the invention of the telegraph is in the lesson, a topic on the "wireless" or a comparison of Morse with Marconi should be given.

While the topical recitation has many excellent qualities, yet its constant use may result in formality and monotony.

An interesting and vitalizing recitation that may be used in the higher grades is the *socialized recitation*, or the recitation conducted by the pupils themselves.

Let the class prepare to teach the lesson and come with questions to ask and problems to be settled. Different pupils may preside during the period. Questions are propounded by the children for open class discussion. Various points may be taken up in argument and the members of the class will seek to convince one another.

If they are carefully guided, this form of recitation becomes a lively and exciting exercise and is much enjoyed by the children.

This method of recitation is well suited to reviews where the class is already in possession of a certain amount of definite information, or it is useful when the textbook lesson offers material that has in it some debatable questions. Such a

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lesson as the period after the Civil War known as the "Reconstruction Period," which involves a discussion of the treatment of the South by Congress and the difficulties that led to the impeachment of Andrew Johnson, would be excellent material for a socialized lesson.

The "Critical Period" after the Revolution, when the colonies endured the chaos and disorder which results from inefficient government, is another interesting topic that would work well in a socialized recitation.

The danger in such an exercise is the tendency of one group of children to monopolize the lesson time while the shy or backward children take little part in the discussion.

The pupils who lead the recitation must be cautioned about this difficulty and urged to ask general questions. Many children are natural teachers and will be remarkably successful in developing the power to think in their companions, while a diffident boy or girl will sometimes respond to the stimulus of the pupil leader more easily than to the expert questioning of the teacher.

Combinations of the various types of recitation may be used to give novelty and variety to the daily work.

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The prevalence of the so-called "*teacher recitation*" has been much criticized by modern educators. This very common and natural evil arises from several causes. The time is limited and the teacher can "pour it in" more quickly herself than obtain results by the slow processes of individual development.

Frequently the teacher's enthusiasm and interest in the subject will cause an over-amplification and illustration of the lesson material. The scholarly, over-zealous teacher is the one who usually becomes the victim of the talking habit.

In a recently published study of conditions based on the examination of many high-school history recitations, the percentage of teacher activity to pupil activity averaged about sixty-two per cent to thirty-eight per cent. In other words, in a thirty-minute recitation the teacher used twenty-four and eight tenths of the time and the class fifteen and two tenths of it. While this special test was made in high schools, the same results might have been obtained in history lessons taught in the grammar grades. Every thoughtful teacher will be easily convinced of the danger of such a method in education. Talking is not teaching. The children cease to exert themselves mentally. Their natural instinct for self-

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expression is suppressed and the lesson produces a kind of mental passivity on the child's part. He has gained, perhaps, some new knowledge, but he did not gain it for himself.

On the other hand, there are legitimate occasions when a little talk by the teacher on a topic in the lesson is a most precious and stimulating gift to a class. A vivid word picture of a great event, the clear exposition of a hard problem in the lesson, the presentation of new light on a question, these manifestations of the teacher's power will often give fresh life to the subjects.

The teacher must not be afraid to use her greater knowledge and abundant resources occasionally in the classroom; what she must guard against is the over-use of this power.

It is really worth more to the child to reason out laboriously the causes for the differing points of view of the North and South on the tariff question than to listen to an explanation, however brilliantly expressed by the teacher.

The boy's conclusions may be meager and inadequate, yet in his future life he must meet and solve just such questions. As a voter, as a member of the civic community in which he lives, he will be forced to think about social and political problems; therefore the most effective training

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his school life can give him in preparation for the future is to teach him to be an independent thinker.

*The point of view in the choice of material for the recitation in the higher elementary grades*

One most important educational function of the teacher in the seventh or eighth grade is the exercise of the historical judgment in the choice of the subject-matter presented to the class.

The teacher who dwells on the political or military events of history and does not develop the economic or social life of a period is out of harmony with modern thought.

No matter what the textbook may offer, the teacher must see to it that the children do not receive a one-sided and unscientific conception of the past.

As this is the only history ever seriously studied by many American children, the responsibility of the teacher for a truthful presentation is great indeed.. In the treatment of seventh-grade material the social elements should be largely stressed. How the people lived in the colonies, their modes of dress, their business methods, their religious customs, their pleasures, their ways of travel, should be dwelt upon. While colonial

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politics need not be studied, a seventh grade should understand enough about a typical colonial government to see that the State Governments of to-day are directly descended from the old colonial system. The simplest outline on the board will reveal this to a class and teach them the continuity of history. The false idea that the colonists were horribly oppressed by the mother country until the Revolution set them free should be eradicated.

In discussing the causes of the Revolution interesting devices and stimulating questions may be used to bring out both sides in that famous controversy.

A class should be taught the modern attitude toward the Revolution, which is that the Revolution was really a Civil War. Many Englishmen, as Pitt and Burke, sympathized with the colonists, while in America thousands of persons disliked separation and believed the cause of the mother country the just one. Hatred of England and the inculcation of false and one-sided opinions should be carefully avoided. Much of the unreasoning dislike of Great Britain found among certain Americans to-day is due to the erroneous teaching they have received in the elementary schools.

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While showing the justice of the American cause, the English arguments should be clearly understood.

Members of a class will enjoy personifying speakers in the British Parliament who are urging the passage of the Stamp Act, as well as their antagonists in America who are advocating its repeal in the Colonial Congress.

The modern government of colonies is an excellent special topic to study during this period. "How Canada and Australia are governed to-day," "How the United States governs the Philippines," are interesting subjects to present to a class.

No period in history is richer in biographical studies than the Revolution. Many fascinating comparisons are possible here. George III and Samuel Adams, André and Nathan Hale, General Gates and General Schuyler, Franklin discussing politics with Louis XVI, Marion and Cornwallis in the Carolinas, are illustrations of the dramatic and personal element whose study by the children will add flavor to the well-known narrative.

While local conditions should influence the study of military events, there are certain definite battles or campaigns, as the battle of Trenton or the Burgoyne campaign, whose historical

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effects demand that their story be studied by a class.

To eliminate all military history would be as unhistorical as to study only military history. The Declaration of Independence without Valley Forge would be a study of a dead document. One is as necessary as the other.

In the critical and formative period which followed the Revolution, a seventh grade can clearly understand the economic storm and stress of the times and the dangerous problems that confronted the new State. Dramatization is an effective method in teaching the making of the Constitution and will be treated under a later topic heading.

In emphasizing material for the eighth grade, the economic and social development should be particularly studied.

The War of 1812 as a military topic is largely a waste of time, but the economic results which arose from it demand careful attention.

No true comprehension of such a man as Andrew Jackson, or the meaning of the "Spoils System," or the financial difficulties of that day can be attained by the children until they realize what kind of a person the average American citizen was in 1837.

## THE RECITATION

In teaching the Civil War much care should be taken to bring out the economic reasons for the war and the true causes of the failure of the Southern Confederacy: the lack of railroads, the lack of manufactures, the final lack of money are of more importance than the minute details of Grant's campaigns.

The quotation, "The cotton gin caused the Civil War, and the McCormick reaper won it," would be a good review topic in a class discussion lesson.

The period of American history which follows the Civil War, the last fifty years, should be developed much more fully than is usually done in elementary schools. The teacher should resist the temptation to dwell upon the earlier and more familiar periods and arrange her work upon a schedule which will allow a proper study of the great modern problems that have arisen since 1877. The skillful teacher can add much to the textbook and the work may be correlated with present-day problems. The Spanish War naturally brings the future status of the Philippines before a class. The passage of the Interstate Commerce Acts, modern questions about railroads, labor problems and the power of capital — such thought connections make the history lesson

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alive to a child and they prepare him for citizenship.

Another important element which should be emphasized is the necessary European background during certain periods of American history.

For example, no satisfactory explanation of the events that crowd the period from Washington to Monroe can be made without some understanding of the French Revolution and the life of Napoleon.

Here is the opportunity for outside readings and special reports which will deeply interest the children. The troubles in France, the conquests of Napoleon, the victories of Nelson, will make clear to them the meaning of Genêt and the X. Y. Z. affair. They will see how we obtained Louisiana and why we laid the embargo and the reason Great Britain impressed our sailors. Many modern problems are solved by such a study. Words and phrases in the newspapers to-day, "blockade," "contraband of war," "rights of neutrals," etc., are explained as part of the history lesson about conditions existing a hundred years ago.

An interesting way of teaching history material in the higher grades is the "*problem*" method of arranging the work to be studied.

## THE RECITATION

The subject-matter of the lesson is considered under the form of some question whose answer is to be found in the textbook. For example, instead of treating the topics which include the French and Indian War as mere facts, the general problem stated for the class to solve is, "Why did France lose her possessions in America?" or, "Why did England win the struggle for the American continent?" All events that follow one another in this connection are related to the question and are part of the solution. If the lesson be on the Revolutionary period, such a problem may be stated as, "The Burgoyne campaign is considered the most decisive in the war. Is this true?" The recitation must answer this question and the interest of the class is aroused in discussing the various phases of the story.

Much American history material may be taught in problem form, and the children grow keen in challenging general statements and tracing out the connection of events that relate to the question. The mere statement of a fact in question form is not necessarily a problem. The real problem must involve an opportunity for doubt and discussion and should include several minor topics. To ask a class, "What are the beliefs of the Republican Party about the tariff?" is not a

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problem. It is an ordinary class question; but to put such a query to a class as, "Why have the two great political parties in the United States always differed about the tariff?" is a topic which would result in an interesting lesson on that rather difficult subject for children to grasp, the tariff question, and the class-work could involve both past and present history in its treatment. The use of the problem topic is merely another form of the topical recitation and makes for variety and mental development.

After reading the textbook in a study recitation, the children themselves are often able to state the problem to be solved for the next day's lesson.

Another novel, modern method of arranging history material may be considered under the so-called "*motivating lesson*" form. This means teaching a history lesson from some everyday subject in which the child's interest is aroused. The idea here is to explain the past through the medium of some present condition or event which has excited the curiosity of a class and about which they themselves desire information.

On their way to school, the children see a group of foreigners working on the street. They wonder about them. Who are they? Why are they there? Through this mental doorway they enter

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in and explore the vast subject of immigration to America. They discuss the reasons for emigration, the various nationalities which have settled here, the services they have rendered, the problems they have created.

Perhaps one of the class is of foreign parentage and he hears at home a discussion on "naturalization" and the attitude of the family toward the new land. He asks in class, "What is it to be an American?" This is the motive for a vigorous lesson on American citizenship. He is shown that America gives him freedom, education, protection, opportunity, and happiness, and that to be an American means to serve and love the great Republic whose rich gifts he enjoys.

The newspapers and magazines are filled with an infinite variety of motivating material. An account of a railway dispute will lead to the Interstate Commerce Act and the growth of transportation; a race riot in some part of the South means a lesson on the results of the Reconstruction Period; the visit to the United States of some famous personage gives a lesson on the government of his country and its relation to America; the study of their own soil conditions and industries will teach a rural school the past history of their State.

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Teaching history by means of the present is a most valuable exercise and is well worth using in our elementary schools; but to use this method alone and discard the textbook and the chronological treatment of past events would end in mental confusion and a superficial, unbalanced, educational system. Constant, daily exercises whose aim is the explanation of the past by connecting it with the modern incident should be, however, introduced into all our history recitations.

The relationship between history and literature should never be forgotten in higher grade teaching.

Famous poems, as *Old Ironsides*, *The Building of the Ship*, *The Blue and the Gray*, interesting books, as *The Crossing* or *The Crisis*, great orations, as *Webster's Reply to Hayne* or the *Gettysburg Address*, should be used as often as time will allow in the classroom.

A few verses from the *Biglow Papers* give color to the story of the struggle over Texas, and a short reading from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* will show a class why it was so tremendous an influence during the period before the Civil War. The children should associate the names of American poets and writers, as Cooper, Lowell, Whittier,

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Longfellow, and Emerson, with the historical events of their time. They should not dwell in a separate world labeled "literature."

This discussion of the conduct of the recitation may be summarized by stating that the teacher may make the ordinary textbook the basis of many interesting and vitalizing lessons. She must seek to present a true conception of the dramatic and wonderful story which we call history. She must see and apply the connection between the past cause and its present-day result. She must use this story as a powerful instrument in the mental development of her pupils. She must above all train them to think intelligently and independently, and to express their thoughts in lucid and definite language.

## **IX**

### **THE USE OF THE OUTLINE**

**M**ODERN educational methods have laid considerable emphasis upon the use of the outline or topical list of events as an aid in the study of history. It is considered an assistant in oral expression and an incentive in the development of historical reasoning.

The outline is fundamentally a condensed synopsis of the most important facts or most essential points in a certain amount of subject material. Its very nature implies a study of cause and effect. It is a brief memorandum of our thoughts upon a certain subject. The aim of the outline is to teach unity, coherence, and the proper emphasis, and its practical use develops a sense of organization and systematic reasoning. Unity must be secured by placing only suitable topics under the proper headings and by excluding all irrelevant and trivial details, yet every idea essential to the general development of the thought should be carefully stated in the outline.

Coherence must be obtained by proper form

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arrangement, each topic being stated in the same general manner, while emphasis is gained by the constant exercise of the reasoning powers.

Since the outline treats of events, movements, or personalities in a definite fashion, it pronounces judgment on the relative value of these events or personalities historically as it is created; therefore, to make a good outline the mind must continually compare and weigh evidence as to the value of the event selected as a topical heading. The outline thus becomes an important exercise in judgment, and its creation by an individual or by a class is a useful and worth-while achievement.

Merely learning an outline made by the teacher or suggested in a textbook, while it may clarify the child's view of the material, is largely an act of the memory, and possesses little educational usefulness.

If a teacher uses the outline a textbook offers, it would be well to have the children discuss the topic headings and prove to their own satisfaction the importance of the selected titles in the author's arrangement.

Some textbooks used in the elementary grades present excellent outlines for class use, and teachers feel they cannot improve upon the book; these topics, therefore, are studied, the class

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merely discussing their meaning or the questions that may arise in connection with them.

Such a method is much better than the old paragraph system because it has the virtue of definite and logical thinking, yet it does not develop directly the pupil's powers of reasoning or teach him to weigh events and judge historical values.

The best method, then, is the use of the outline created by the pupil, the result of his own mental initiative and judgment.

Outlines may be made in class during a study recitation from the open book, or they may be developed during a class recitation.

Pupils may be required to prepare an outline at home and present it as their point of view on the subject-matter.

After the children have made a series of outlines, they learn the aim and method of organization desired and frequently become very skillful in handling topics and suggesting forms of arrangement.

The proper English form should be taught and followed, and the pupils should not be allowed to make outlines in which sentences and phrases are jumbled together in a careless and disorderly fashion.

## THE OUTLINE

Making a good outline is a difficult task. It requires concentration, judgment, and a sense of form as well as a knowledge of the English language.

When the outline is being developed in the classroom, the topics should be suggested by the various members of the class. Each topic heading or sub-title should be carefully considered before it is accepted as the proper title for the event or idea under discussion. The words used, the notation and logical order of the thoughts expressed in the outline, should be criticized by the class, and the final statement in its perfected form shown clearly on the blackboard.

The children should understand that a summary or a synopsis in narrative style is not a class outline, and they should be trained to distinguish between them.

The following outline is an illustration of an outline developed in a study recitation on the textbook material that preceded a lesson on the Mexican War. The teacher had stated that the outline must show the causes of the war with Mexico. The children arranged the topics in the order they considered the most historical, one member of the class writing the topics on the board as they were formulated.

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### *The story of Texas*

- A. Why the South needed more land.
  - 1. What the cotton gin had done.
  - 2. Westward expansion.
  - 3. The Missouri Compromise line and the slave-owners.
- B. How the people felt about slavery.
  - 1. The feeling in the South.
    - a. Reasons for slavery.
  - 2. The feeling in the North.
    - a. Some opposition to slavery.
      - (1) The Abolitionists.
- C. How Texas became independent.
  - 1. Texas a State of Mexico.
    - a. The Americans in Texas.
    - b. The discontent of the Americans.
  - 2. Texas declares her independence (1836).
    - a. Her struggle with Mexico.
      - (1) What General Sam Houston did.
  - 3. Texas becomes an independent State.
    - a. "The Lone Star State."
- D. How Texas entered the Union.
  - 1. Texas applies for admission.
  - 2. The struggle between the parties.
    - a. Causes of the dispute.
      - (1) Slavery and the boundary claims of Texas.
  - 3. How Texas was admitted (1845).
    - a. What Tyler did.
    - b. What Polk did.

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- E. Why Texas caused the war with Mexico.
  1. What Texas claimed.
  2. What Mexico claimed.
  3. How the war came about.
  4. Was the war just?

The material for the outline was all in the textbook, but scattered through various chapters, and some of the topics were even taken from footnotes.

In reciting from this outline, each topic was discussed orally. Map work showing the Missouri Compromise line and the disputed boundaries was used.

The teacher read several extracts from the *Biglow Papers* to illustrate the spirit of the times. A special topic on Sam Houston was given by a member of the class, and there was a lively exchange of views on the interesting moral question which was suggested by the last sub-title. It would be possible to correlate such a lesson with class-work in current events if these were being studied by the children.

The chief value of such an exercise is its influence in teaching historical continuity and clearness of thought in organizing material.

Another outline made by a class when studying a later period of history was used as a basis for

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an oral review conducted by the members of the  
class.

*How the United States controls business*

- A. Why it is necessary.
  - 1. The growth of the railroads.
  - 2. The growth of great business.
  - 3. The growth of labor unions.
- B. How the Government gets its power.
  - 1. The Constitution.
  - 2. Laws made by Congress.
- C. How "big business" helps America.
- D. How "big business" may hurt America.
- E. The Acts passed by Congress.
  - 1. To control the railroads.
    - a. Interstate Commerce Law (1887).
    - b. Railroad Rate Act (1906).
  - 2. To control "big business."
    - a. Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1890).
    - b. Some recent Acts.

In the review lesson on the outline the children discussed the words "trusts," "monopoly," "strikes," "capitalists," "corporations." They had to give illustrations of the valuable work done by railroads and large organizations of capital as well as their abuses. The clause in the Constitution giving Congress power over commerce was recited or read. Some of the aims of the labor

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unions were mentioned. While the children of an elementary grade are necessarily limited in their ability to deal very profoundly with such material, they are usually deeply interested in it, as it touches on everyday life, whose problems are their own.

In thus using an outline as a basis for recitation or review work, the child is obeying his natural instinct for orderly reasoning about events that have impressed or interested him. He sees the deeper meanings of the facts presented by the textbook and he enjoys searching for the strong but often hidden cords that bind the past cause to the later result.

Therefore, in creating an outline he has erected a thought skeleton which the recitation clothes with flesh and endows with life.

# X

## THE USE OF ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

SOME one has said that we remember one tenth of what we hear, five tenths of what we see, and nine tenths of what we do. The power and value of the visual and manual appeal is becoming rapidly one of the commonplaces of education. The message which the eye and hand carry to the brain, the deep, mysterious influence of the physical upon the mental, are all part to-day of our new educational creed.

We know that we cannot teach chemistry without a laboratory and the proper scientific apparatus; neither can we teach history without using some illustrative material to give the proper sense reaction to our mental stimulus.

Our problem, then, is to teach the child to see and to do as well as to think and to feel; for history, instead of being a book subject alone, is peculiarly a hand subject and an eye subject. Under the magic of this modern method the child not only thinks about the Indian or the Mississ-

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sippi River, but he sees them and he even creates his own conception of them.

Maps, charts, pictures, sand houses, etc., give color and meaning to the words in the textbook or in the story reader, and the learning by doing is a potent factor in the child's development.

Among the many varieties of illustrative material which are helpful in elementary-grade work are maps and charts.

### *Maps and charts*

It would scarcely seem necessary to dwell upon the value and necessity of these most essential instruments in all good history teaching. To talk about Washington's campaigns without a map accompaniment, or to dilate on the advantages of the Louisiana Purchase without knowing where it was, or to discuss the future of the Philippine Islands without locating them, would be as foolish as to describe the way to make bread in a domestic-science lesson without demonstrating the operation.

The map, the chart, the globe are all necessary adjuncts to every history recitation. How to use them most effectively is the teacher's problem.

In some schools the teacher may possess few good wall maps, no history charts or globes; she

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must therefore depend upon the map in the textbook for the class use. The more maps in a textbook the better. The children should be taught an intensive study of these maps. They should feel that the map is part of the daily lesson, and it should be examined and consulted when the lesson is prepared. All geographical allusions should be noted and the pupils should be held responsible for their accurate location.

Children will not do this unless they are trained by the class-work to understand and appreciate the value of the maps. Indifference to the map is a common weakness in history teaching. High-school graduates as well as elementary-school pupils are frequently unable to locate important cities, rivers, and even countries. The relationship that exists between the history lesson and the atlas or map should be constantly emphasized as an essential element in every day's work. That the geography of a place frequently explains its history is a truth that a class will in time grasp and enjoy.

Wall maps are useful, as they give the setting on a large scale, and the place under discussion may be clearly seen and its geography thoroughly impressed. Besides wall maps, there are several excellent sets of history charts which are ex-

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tremely helpful in history teaching. These show the progressive stages of national development. They represent various periods or special historical events and give meaning and definiteness to the narrative. The use of a good history chart in a seventh or eighth grade will well repay its initial cost to the school.

Besides the ordinary wall maps and history charts, outline maps may be obtained. These are peculiarly valuable for review work and can be made excellent exercises in accuracy of location and topical descriptions. They are usually made of blackboard material and can be erased and cleaned after the lesson.

A child sent to an outline map of this character to locate or draw in some important city, river, campaign, mountain chain, etc., must actually possess very definite knowledge of the geography asked for, or his mistakes will be so palpable that he will receive the sharp criticism of his classmates. If the teacher is unable to procure a wall outline map, she herself can easily place one on the blackboard and use it in the same fashion.

Outline maps may be made by the children themselves on the blackboard and important history and geography connections made on them. Children studying New Jersey or Massachusetts

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or any home state history can easily put in early settlements, Indian trails, famous historical centers, if there are any, battlefields, railroads, or stage-coach routes.

The small individual outline maps which may be used for special historical illustrations are well worth using. Such topics as medieval trade routes, voyages, territorial expansion, etc., may be placed on these by the pupil either at home or during the class lesson. Such map work not only imparts a knowledge of geography, but the manual dexterity necessary to produce a neat, well-drawn, or nicely colored map is a profitable exercise in handwork.

Sand-table maps may be used in the primary grades to illustrate community history stories as well as community geography. If the children make a map that shows the location of their own town or village and its river and hill environment, they can also develop from it its past history. As the history of a community is usually the result of its natural and physical surroundings, the sand table will show this well.

On the sand-table map the children can make the first road, the tavern where the stage-coach used to stop. They can indicate the site of the first house and the first church, perhaps some

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Revolutionary landmark, or some interesting local monument. Emphasis on local history is exceedingly worth while. One of the class may live in a famous old house; another may be able to tell some legend or family tradition about his home. Perhaps a soldier was hidden in his cellar, or Indians lived in the woods where to-day the children have picnic suppers. The sand map may indicate the site of the first schoolhouse and show the gradual growth of the community. Local history, because it emphasizes the everyday familiar world around them, is peculiarly fascinating to young children. All such material is easily correlated with geography and may be illustrated by constructive work in clay, paper, cardboard, or plasticine.

In primary work, often the best map is the blackboard map made by the teacher herself. She can omit useless details and place upon it the actual essentials adapting it to the story in the book or the story she has told the class. The ability to do this successfully is well worth cultivating by teachers of elementary grades. As the map is one form by which the process of materializing the history lesson is developed, the use of manual illustrative work is another method of visualization.

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### *The use of constructive hand work*

It has been asserted that nearly every incident in history can be visualized and reproduced in concrete form. From the Indian camp-fire to the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation it is possible to portray in visible form the event whose story the child meets in his history study. This constructive work may be of many various kinds, such as: —

1. Blackboard illustration by the teacher and the children.
2. Paper-folding for caps, boats, furniture, etc.
3. Paper-cutting.
4. Color work, water-color pictures, crayons, etc.
5. The use of cardboard and corrugated paper for houses, cabins, wagons, etc.
6. The use of clay or plasticine; everything imaginable can be made from clay.
7. The use of the sand table on which the scene may be portrayed.

These materials are the means by which the history story becomes to the child a living reality. When he makes the cabins and stockaded houses of the early pioneers, he creates for himself the primitive atmosphere wherein Boone and Clark played their heroic parts.

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Constructive work is valuable in every grade, but its practice in the primary classes is a fundamental element in all successful teaching. Here the sand table should be the center of the history work. On it may be shown all forms of primitive life from the "tree-dwellers" to the homes of the Pilgrims. The Thanksgiving story may be delightfully portrayed, the Indian guests and their Pilgrim hosts may be made of clay or paper and the feast spread out-of-doors on wooden tables as the ancient record tells us. The Southern plantation, with its stately manor house, its tobacco fields, and its negro cabins, is another interesting sand-table problem. The children delight in this form of manual work. They enjoy dressing dolls or painting paper dolls to represent Quaker and Puritan maidens, French missionaries or Dutch matrons. They will reproduce, often with extraordinary accuracy, Spanish ships and colonial gentlemen, New England schoolboys, and British redcoats. They develop accuracy and observation and sometimes much delicacy of touch and remarkable ingenuity and manual skill.

Thus, through the art of creation, the historic past is re-lived by the child, and its scenes and personages become part of his history inheritance.

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### *The use of pictures*

All children enjoy pictures and they are helpful in all grades of history teaching. Picture impressions are very powerful, and many a lifelong idea has resulted from a child's interpretation of a picture. Therefore inartistic and poor pictures are really hindrances to proper educational development because they give a false and inaccurate account of a historic event. The well-known picture, "Washington Crossing the Delaware," is really historically ridiculous. The comment of a sailor's son in a Barnegat school who, after gazing at the picture, remarked, "Washington was n't much of a seaman, standing up in a boat rocking that way among the icebergs," is an excellent criticism. The picture merely records the fancies of the artist who originally painted it, yet thousands of persons have had this scene indelibly impressed upon them by the study of this picture.

✓ In primary work the picture is much used as a basis for story-telling. Good pictures may be easily obtained and cheaply mounted. The children can study the picture before or after the story is told and the details of the picture may help in dramatizing the story or in its English

## ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

reproduction. Such a picture as Millais's "Boyhood of Sir Walter Raleigh," showing the eager faces of the two boys listening to the tales of the old sailor, or the well-known "Lafayette at Mount Vernon," with its pretty, old-fashioned Virginia setting, are examples of story pictures helpful in primary teaching.

It is probably unnecessary to warn teachers against holding up before a class pictures which are too small to be seen by all the children or against passing a picture around a class while the story is being told. The child cannot look at the picture and listen to the story at the same time unless the group is a very small one and the teacher is telling the story from the picture, using it as illustrative material.

— Pictures in the textbook are often neglected by both teacher and pupils. If the pictures are good, they deserve to be definitely studied. Merely looking at them is not studying them. The details should be examined and the children asked to describe the meaning and spirit of the scene portrayed and realize how it illustrates the text.

In the higher grades, the pupils should be encouraged to collect postcards, pictures from magazines and newspapers, and estimate their artistic and literary value. Both civics and history may

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be greatly vivified by such pictures, and class interest strongly increased.

A picture of the Supreme Court in session, of the President addressing Congress, glimpses of scenes at Ellis Island showing the experiences of the immigrant, or a picture of a great Western wheat-field swept by a McCormick reaper give color and life to the text. In collecting outside material of this character, a class should be taught discrimination. Many newspaper pictures are not worth preserving. Gaudy coloring, poorly executed prints, sensational subject-matter, should be banished by the class itself as unworthy a place in the classroom life.

Good pictures for elementary-grade work may be obtained from The Perry Picture Company, Malden, Massachusetts; from the Mentor Publishing Company, 222 Fourth Avenue, New York City; from the Cosmos Picture Company, New York City.

Source pictures, as the McKinley Illustrated Source Pictures, The McKinley Company, 1619 Ranstead Street, Philadelphia, are excellent for higher-grade work. These pictures show the quaint dress, the customs, the buildings, the manners of a past age. They are genuine reproductions of old photographs or drawings or cartoons

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in old newspapers. A seventh, eighth, or ninth grade will appreciate and enjoy them. The jokes and fashions of Jackson's day will reveal to them the social life of the time more effectively than the textbook narrative. No word description of an early railroad train will be half as interesting or illuminating as the picture of an old-fashioned locomotive and its cars.

Blackboard drawing is another important picture method. The teacher who can sketch as she talks, no matter how crudely she does it, is able to hold the fascinated interest of her class. In primary teaching, the picture on the blackboard may be used in innumerable ways to illustrate the varied phases of the "storied past."

The stereoscope is used most successfully in many schools and greatly enjoyed by the children. These pictures reproduce wonderfully the actual scene and give a realistic vision of the city or country they represent in a marvelous fashion.

Some schools possess a lantern, and the history teacher may be fortunate enough to gather a small collection of good slides which may be used for an occasional talk or lecture.

No ordinary recitation or book work is able to create as lasting an impression as the pictures thrown upon the screen. Good slides and a good

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lantern are investments that richly repay the school authorities, and no doubt the day will come when their use in the classroom will be an essential factor in all educational work.

History has, by the use of manual and visual devices, become alive to many thousands of children to whom a book narrative made no definite appeal. While the spiritual or ethical significance of the history story should never be lost or the underlying idea cheapened and distorted in order to overemphasize some form of illustrative work, yet as an aid in elementary teaching its tremendous power to awaken the child's interest in the past is a most fundamental factor in successful education.

## XI

### DRAMATIZATION

COMING into her schoolroom one wet morning a teacher of a rather dull and unresponsive fourth grade was surprised, indeed. In front of the desk the children were crowded around a large green spot which on closer inspection was seen to be the torn lining of the old waste-basket. Standing on the green area was a little Irish girl, a band of red ribbon tied around her freckled forehead, in her hand was the blackboard ruler, and she was pointing it toward the kneeling figure of a decidedly shabby and none too clean little Polish Jew whose dark eyes were eagerly fastened upon her. "Git up, Sir Walter," she commanded majestically; "your queen is well pleased and you shall have a new cloak at once, and because of this 'ere brave deed you may come to my castle for breakfast."

"He'd orter kiss your hand now," coached one of the crowd, when the teacher was perceived at the door. In a moment the scene dissolved. The

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children rushed to their seats and only the green muslin cloth remained, a mute witness to the memory of a famous incident.

The teacher had been telling history stories and the class had been reading them for several months, but the results had not been very cheering. The English reproductions were dull and misspelled, the oral expression halting and inaccurate, and the class seemed to lack imagination and appreciation. The teacher therefore returned the lining to the waste-basket very thoughtfully.

When the history lesson came that afternoon, she said suddenly: "Let's play one of the history stories we have read to-day as you played Sir Walter this morning. Shall we begin with Robin Hood and his adventures in the forest? Whom shall we have for Robin Hood?"

A dozen hands waved in the air. She gazed into eager, transformed little faces. "I want to be King Richard!" "Please let me be Prince John! I know just how to play him!" "Don't let the boys be everything!" — were some of the entreaties that filled her ears.

From that hour dramatization entered the doors of that fourth grade and dullness and inertia vanished before its alluring charms. The

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play instinct so powerful in the child was aroused and the history lesson was eagerly prepared. Later, in review, the incidents were frequently acted, much to the enjoyment of the class.

Under the severe criticism showered upon actors whose language was considered unworthy of their parts, English expression rapidly improved. "If you don't talk better, you can't play being Bishop," was the threat made by various members of the class to the young person who sought to personate Stephen Langton in the signing of the Magna Charta.

The class at last aspired to give a real play and invite the home circles.

The play was largely written by themselves and was a thrilling picture of the varied adventures of a certain little Hugh who dwelt in a medieval castle. The fathers and mothers all came, and despite the vicissitudes of home-made scenery and costumes, Hugh was presented in most excellent fashion.

He was a truly noble page, went hunting and hawking, visited fairs and monasteries, saved ladies from cruel robbers, and was finally knighted amid much glory and applause.

As the teacher watched the delighted faces of the admiring audience and listened to the spirited

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lines of her "fourth-graders," she decided she was glad, indeed, that she had truly interpreted the possibilities of the scene around the old green lining that morning.

She had merely allowed the natural instincts of the children to express themselves through emotion and action. The old romantic stories of the past were now eternally alive to them, for they had lived them over in the doing.

Dramatization is to-day universally recognized as one of the most valuable forms of human expression, and its use in education is enthusiastically advocated.

No subject offers so rich a field for dramatic representation as history. Literature itself cannot invent more emotional or imaginative situations than can be found in the great drama of human progress and struggle. No tragedies are darker than those that have really happened, no comedies more joyful than those men themselves have played.

Children delight in the heroic and the unusual. Many are natural actors and will without the slightest self-consciousness personate any character that appeals to their interest.

Kindergarten children enjoy "pretending" in their games and boys will play Indians for hours

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at a time and are passionately absorbed in the scenes they invent.

Self-consciousness, which begins to develop during adolescence, and which gives awkwardness and diffidence to the high-school boy or girl, does not often interfere with the dramatic instinct in children in the elementary schools. In the lower grades the acting is better than in the eighth, it is more spontaneous and less fearful of ridicule, more original and naturally vigorous.

History dramatizations in school naturally fall into two classes: the formal or semi-formal prepared play, pageant, tableau, etc., and the informal or spontaneous presentation of some historical event in dramatic form. This latter form is naturally a review method in character.

The *formal play* may be given in different ways and has varied possibilities. The play may be taken from a book or magazine. It may be written by the children themselves. It may be purely historical or it may be an imaginary drama placed in historical setting. The children learn the parts and present the scenes to an outside audience. Plays founded on the lives of famous men, as Nathan Hale or Daniel Boone, or on the well-known Sherwood Forest Tales, are examples of this kind of play.

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The pageant with its varied activities is a delightful form of the prepared play. Scenes from community history may be enacted. Dancing, music, and symbolic tableaux may be introduced.

Not long ago a country school in New England had a little pageant under the trees in the yard and invited the parents. They gave some scenes from the history of the State and one or two little incidents in the past history of that school district. They closed with a pretty tableau commemorating the beauty of education and patriotism. The people had come for miles to see the "school show" and the interest aroused was remarkable. The next town meeting appropriated more money for that district than it had ever received and it now boasts a small school library as a result of the little play.

In the lower grades, dramatic opportunities are innumerable. The life of Columbus, William Penn and the Indians, Marion and the British officer are illustrations of good primary play material. Scenes from Indian story work or simple little legends showing primitive life may be used in the first or second grade with excellent results. Such a book as Stevenson's *Dramatized Scenes from American History* contains

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suggestive plays which may be used in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

The reproduction in dramatic form of the making of the Constitution has become an admirable and useful exercise in many eighth-grade classes. The class carefully read the sources, as Madison's diary and the various speeches of the members of the convention. They become saturated with the ideas of the speakers and acquainted with their personalities. The scenes may be presented in different ways. Washington is chosen president of the convention; the compromises are fought over and debated; the dissenting members withdraw; Franklin and Hamilton make their famous appeals; and finally, amid the solemn congratulations of the assembled delegates, the great document is formally signed. The children in presenting such a historic scene usually catch the spirit and ideals and even the language of the men they personate.

Some schools have followed the making of the Constitution with a symbolic series of tableaux representing the ratification by the various States. The signing of the Declaration of Independence may also be portrayed in similar fashion.

Biography is naturally a fertile field for the

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display of the dramatic instinct. Scenes from the life of such a man as Benjamin Franklin may be so skillfully arranged that they present a picture of colonial and national history: —

1. Franklin, the poor boy, eating the loaf of bread on Philadelphia streets.
2. Franklin, the scientific student, in the episode with the lightning rod.
3. Franklin trying to raise the money to equip Braddock's little army for the field.
4. Franklin standing at the bar of the House of Commons during his famous examination on the state of the colonies.
5. Franklin urging the signing of the Declaration of Independence, "lest we all hang separately."
6. Franklin, the fêted hero of the French Court, surrounded by the admiring ladies.
7. Franklin, an old man of eighty, making the final speech in the Constitutional Convention.

In these scenes the life of one man is really the history of a people, and much may be done in presenting them that will teach the dress, the customs, and the language of the special epoch.

As part of the English work, the class may write the dialogue and speeches, while the slight costuming required might be prepared in the

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manual-training period with some assistance or contributions from home.

Too ornate and elaborate dramatizations spoil the simplicity and value of school exercises of this character, or make the preparation a burden rather than a pleasure, and destroy the naturalness of the attempt. Very little stage scenery is necessary if the young actors are filled with the spirit of the play. Children love to "dress up," but so vivid are their imaginations that a band around the brow will create a knightly costume or a feather in the hair an Indian's war panoply. Like the Elizabethan stage, which used signs to represent scenery, they do not require a Belasco setting for their little dramas.

Teachers are sometimes so troubled over these details that they are afraid to introduce much dramatization in their work. If they would realize that elaborate staging is not in harmony with the simple ideas that the child's play presents, they would enjoy this form of teaching and use it more frequently.

Besides the formal or prepared play, the *spontaneous* or *informal* dramatization may be used. This is merely the class review presented in a dramatic form and is especially valuable with children below the sixth grade. The story

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the children read or the teacher tells is acted spontaneously and without preparation by the class, as in the knighting of Sir Walter Raleigh on the waste-basket lining. The parts are chosen rapidly and the children use the words that come naturally to them to express their conception of the characters they desire to represent.

Much primary history lends itself readily to this form of dramatic inspiration.

The story of Joseph and the story of Columbus are series of dramatic episodes. Scenes from English history — as King Alfred burning the cakes, or Robert Bruce and the spider — are peculiarly easy to act. Early colonial life in America from the Pilgrims to Daniel Boone are filled with dramatic incidents. No scenery and no costuming are necessary for this work; the scene is presented merely as part of the lesson.

Besides the reproduction of actual historical events, imaginary scenes in a historical setting may be used, as historical poems, extracts from historical stories. Little plays where the children suggest plot and scenes and help write the lines are often useful exercises. Occasionally a committee of children may be able to present a dramatization to the class without any assistance from the teacher.

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The study of the past is necessary in order to portray the language, customs, and appearance of the various characters of the play. This is good training both in history and in English, and the plot development, however elementary it may be, requires some reasoning and sense of logical order as well as some definite knowledge of historical facts.

The little girl who wrote that Queen Elizabeth took the first train to Plymouth to meet Francis Drake on his return from America would have discovered her mistake had she been writing a play around the event with the members of her class.

Dramatization in any form is an interesting and effective method of teaching, but like all methods should not be tried continually. Its over-employment may produce an artificial stimulation which will in time react unfavorably on some children. They will find other forms of study dull and stupid and they develop an unhealthy mental activity. Nervous and shy children sometimes do not enjoy acting any part and dread the publicity and responsibility of the play. Therefore the dramatic method, while it arouses enthusiasm and is a valuable aid in inspirational teaching, should always be used with care and never abused.

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Teachers should also be cautioned on the choice of material for dramatization. Some subjects should never be acted in a schoolroom for obvious reasons: battle scenes, deathbed scenes, Indian attacks, massacres, executions, and the like, or scenes where the physical conditions render the attempt to portray them ridiculous, as Washington crossing the Delaware, etc. All such episodes, however dramatic in one sense, are unfit or incapable of proper presentation by children in school. Good taste and common sense must govern the teacher's arrangement of material.

In general, however, it may be said that dramatization is a potent and noble educational instrument.

No one who has ever watched a class "play" a lesson and has noted the grace, the *abandon*, the lack of self-consciousness, the delight with which they re-lived their little drama, their complete absorption in the characters, can for a moment doubt the power of the dramatic instinct or question its place in the modern schoolroom.

## XII

### DEBATES

ONE of the oldest forms of discussion sacred to educational memory from the district school to the college is the prepared debate.

We find accounts of public debating in the medieval universities and in colonial curriculums. "To talk on one's feet" is an art which has been practiced wherever men have attempted to persuade or reason with their fellows from Socrates to Lincoln.

The debate is valuable because it teaches *first* the art of fluent English expression. In order to debate at all, one must be able to talk; he must also talk clearly, accurately, definitely. He must clothe his ideas rapidly in language which is convincing and persuasive. Vague statements, faltering expressions, incoherent remarks end in confusion and disgrace. The power to speak to the point is no mean gift. It is hard to cultivate and the debate is a powerful factor in its development.

*Secondly*, the debate teaches self-confidence.

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The debater must forget himself in his subject. His desire to win his argument will cause him to lose the natural diffidence and self-consciousness which often overwhelm young speakers before an audience. Shy girls who never say much in a class recitation become surprisingly fluent when they find themselves champions for their side in a hot debate.

A *third* debate value is the knowledge it necessarily gives of the rules and limitations of what is called parliamentary law. The formality and procedure observed in even a simple school debate impresses the youthful citizen and prepares him for the practical later experiences in the lodge and political meeting.

A *fourth* value is the everyday virtue of learning how to control one's temper. The give-and-take of the debate, the power to hear a cherished argument torn to pieces, ridiculed, and rejected, and yet maintain one's poise and answer politely, is a social training that is a fine preparation for any later business in life.

To this may be added the keenness of thought, the quick wit required to answer an unexpected attack, or to meet some new argument with a better one.

Children find this difficult to do. They can

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summarize or report statements they have learned, but find it hard to think of new material or make a good rebuttal.

The encounter sharpens their intelligence, however, and the mental energy and activity engendered is never wasted. A class is usually extremely alert during a debate. Even the dullest are wide awake and eager to help in the battle of wits.

*Last*, but not least, the debate is the antidote for careless thinking or superficial study. If the debaters do not know the subject, they are literally lost. Nothing is so fatal as poor preparation in a debate. The boy or girl who is the best prepared is usually the winner, while the ineffective speaker is the pupil whose argument will not stand attack.

Children learn this truth quickly, and a whole class will study eagerly the details of some subject for a class debate when the same ground in an ordinary lesson would be explored with small enthusiasm. The debate, therefore, has value as a method of arousing interest and creating a certain mental atmosphere in the classroom.

In the seventh or eighth grades or in the junior high school, the debate would be naturally somewhat elementary in character. It should be less

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formally conducted than in high school or college. As many as possible should take part in it, and the subjects should be interesting and easily grasped by the pupils.

The ordinary procedure of the debate is described in any manual of parliamentary law and is also given in many books on English composition. The strictest forms are not necessary in a simple school debate, although a certain order and dignity adds to the interest and power of the exercise. Children who do not take definite part in actual argument should assist the leaders in the preparation of material or contribute something in the way of rebuttal. If debates take place often, different leaders should always be chosen.

Informal debates between two classes or two sections of a class may be used during a recitation period. Each group should choose its leader and arrange the sides.

History and civics offer many suggestions which make enlivening debates.

The discussion of a dead issue is less valuable to a class than some everyday problem whose solution has some practical bearing on life. A debate on the slave question seems futile to-day, but a debate on the future of the Philippines

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might be worth while. Such subjects as, "Resolved, that the French explorers made a greater permanent contribution to American history than the Spanish explorers," or, "Resolved, that the Stamp Act was a legal tax," or, "Resolved, that Alexander Hamilton rendered greater services to the nation than Thomas Jefferson," will stir a class to interested discussion. Present-day subjects, as, "Shall we have military training in school?" "Shall our town adopt commission government?" "Ought immigration to be restricted?" "Ought the President to be elected by popular vote?" "Has woman suffrage been successful in actual practice?" are a few illustrations of modern problems which might be handled by a class about to enter the high school. The treatment of the topics will be somewhat crude and superficial, but the material involved is not above their comprehension, whereas such a question as the Government ownership of railways or certain economic and political problems are utterly unfit for consideration by elementary-school children.

If possible, town or community or school questions should be used for debates. These are especially interesting and valuable. The necessity for new parks, for playgrounds, for some school

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improvement, or some new school rule are practical subjects for debate.

The chief criticisms of the use of the debate in school are, first, the time taken from other school work to prepare the subject, and secondly, the small percentage of children who take an active part in the actual exercise. These difficulties prevent the debate from becoming a frequently used device.

On the other hand, the debate is an excellent stimulus to a class. It arouses class spirit and enthusiasm. It presents valuable knowledge in a striking and dramatic way. It gives the pupils a sense of the power of formal argument and a balanced mental poise. It teaches the value of facts and the weakness of mere rumor, gossip, or even newspaper assertions.

Therefore, the judicious use of the debate in the higher grades of the elementary school is both helpful and interesting.

## XIII

### RELATION OF HISTORY TO GEOGRAPHY

THE necessity and value of geography as a fundamental part of all history teaching has been already discussed in previous chapters.

History, however, is so largely conditioned upon geographical and economic environment that it may be worth while to emphasize again this significant relationship.

Climate, soil, waterways, mountain systems, these everyday natural phenomena, are the real causes that decide the fate of nations and give character to their history.

Just as daily life makes the man, shapes his ideals, and creates his mental atmosphere, so does the physical environment create and shape the outlook, the ambitions, the very soul of a people.

Why was ancient Greece so individual in development, so weak politically, yet so brilliant and constructive in art and literature? Her mountain barriers and her stimulating climate answer us. The great history of Great Britain is but the history of a group of islands "set in the

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silver sea." Scotch rigidity of life, the pleasant manners of the Italian, the dull phlegm of the Esquimaux are but the resultants of the climate in which they are bred.

The world's most stupendous wars have been usually fought because of some economic or geographic question. Cotton-raising and new cotton machinery largely caused the Civil War, while the gigantic struggle of the present day is, as we know, born of desire for national expansion and conflicting attempts to secure greater sea power and land dominion.

America has become the greatest commercial and manufacturing nation in the world. Everywhere her people are carrying her products and seeking new avenues for her trade; the intensive study of geography is therefore more important than ever. The geographical element in history has not been sufficiently emphasized in our schools.

The child naturally sees each subject as a separate group of facts to be studied by itself. He does not mentally relate them. Modern methods of education have sought earnestly to break down these barriers and present this knowledge in some unified way.

The constant use of the map, the chart, the

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relief map, the lantern lecture talk, the continual reference to the geography element in the lesson material are practical ways of enforcing this ideal.

In primary-history stories geography and history are literally one. Primitive life is based on the out-of-doors world. The child who hears about the cave-dwellers or studies the way the Indian made his home, worked, journeyed, or played, studies the forest, the river, the uses of fire and clay, the trapping of wild animals, the raising of corn and tobacco. If he studies the desert life, he meets the Arab and the Nile; he hears of Joseph and his adventures and of the big brothers who went down to Egypt to buy corn.

The Columbus story is a geography story. The peculiar ideas men had about the ocean and the big world, the green islands the Spaniards found, the Indians who were there — all these are as important factors in the story as the tale of Isabella and her jewels.

In teaching colonial life the variety in customs, business, amusements, even dress, may be traced to soil and climate as well as to religion and politics. Why did the New England boy go to a town school while his far-away Virginia cousin had a tutor in the house? Why were there so many villages in New York and Massachusetts

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and no towns in the Carolinas except along the coast?

As has been suggested, the geographical element is fundamental in treating the colonial period. The actual settlements were aided or hindered by the soil and mountain systems, the river power, the harbors, the climate found by the settlers who first attempted to conquer the vast American continent. A series of geography lessons showing the westward movement from 1607 to the present day would be a good introduction to seventh-grade study of settlements. Special topics on transportation facilities might be used to advantage in studying each period of migration.

The Indian trail, the stage-coach, the flatboat, to the modern Union Pacific express train, form a series of fascinating studies for this grade.

Geography illuminates many other history problems. Why were the States so jealous of one another, so hard to unite in a national union? What was the reason the democratic and peace-loving Jefferson so eagerly desired to buy New Orleans and was willing "to stretch the Constitution until it cracked" to obtain Louisiana?

What caused the War of 1812? What has been the effect of the Erie Canal upon our history?

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What led to the desire for Mexican territory and finally won the gold-fields of California?

The fierce struggle over the slave acts was really a contest over land possessions.

The teacher and the class will find innumerable opportunities from material in American history to prove that geography and economic conditions have shaped the destiny of the Nation.

Such a point of view also clarifies many present-day problems. What do we mean by the "New South"? What shall we do about the immigration to our cities? What will become of the country districts? What is the value of the great conservation movements? What have the railroads done for us? These questions will enliven any history class.

The geographic and economic answer is, however, not the only answer to all problems.

While this point of view is valuable and explains much that we see, it does not explain everything. Men have always been moved to action by motives other than the "bread-and-butter" motive, and they still are. We should teach a dangerous and materialistic history if we did not show that social, religious, and patriotic ideals have always swayed and often ultimately decided the judgments of our people.

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If cotton and the cotton gin largely produced the conditions that caused the Civil War, the great moral issue underneath finally forced the conflict.

From the higher elementary grades the majority of children pass out into the business of life. They accept the ideals they have learned in the schoolroom. While the teacher of history realizes the enormous significance of this modern interpretation of events which stresses so heavily the purely material side, she should never forget to teach that "man does not live by bread alone," and that the history of a nation is as much the history of its soul as of its body. Washington at Valley Forge and Lincoln at Gettysburg, although they had been moulded by the environment into which they were born, still suffered, endured, and conquered because they were swayed by spiritual forces that could never be measured or explained by any purely physical interpretation.

## XIV

### CONCERNING ENGLISH

THAT English expression spoken or written is a subject isolated and solitary has long since been denied by modern educators.

Teachers believe to-day that a child should be taught to spell names and places in the history or geography lesson with as much care as he is taught to spell in the so-called English lesson. They think that mistakes in grammatical form are as important when a pupil is reciting on the Civil War as when he is discussing a poem of Whittier's.

The whole school atmosphere should emphasize the correct and vigorous use of the noble language we call "English."

No problem is, however, more difficult for the ordinary teacher to solve than this one of teaching children to think, spell, and write "good English."

In our American schools we labor against overwhelming obstacles. Many thousands of foreign

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children, speaking at home foreign languages, bring into our classes a foreign idiom which is almost impossible to eradicate.

Others living in an environment which produces a cheap, slangy, incorrect English recite and write crudely and inaccurately. Some children lack eye and ear perception and seem incapable of grasping the sound of words or their proper written forms. Certain pupils who speak a moderately correct English never acquire any vocabulary and struggle through their educational career with a pitifully meager outfit of words.

These and many other difficulties hundreds of hard-working elementary teachers meet daily in their work, and they frequently lose heart in the conflict.

This book makes no attempt to offer any complete solution to this great problem. It can only suggest that eternal vigilance is the price of good English, even more than it is of liberty. It can but urge the constant, everyday emphasis upon English at all times and in all lessons. The child should be taught that much of his future success in business or professional life depends upon his use of his own language. Well-paid positions demand a proper knowledge of the national tongue.

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Since the only way to acquire this is to speak and write English constantly, the daily history lesson is an excellent medium for drill in the subject, as it lends itself to oral and written expression in many forms.

The teacher herself should be the exponent of this doctrine. Whether it be the telling of a story or the explanation of the Interstate Commerce Act, she should give it with clearness and simplicity. Slip-shod pronunciation, common or vulgar phrases, react on the children at once.

Because a child acquires with extraordinary facility new words and new modes of expression, we should seek to make each history lesson a model in English form. We correct misspelled words or flagrant grammatical errors, but allow such careless phrases as "The President passed the Embargo Act," or, "The Indians went against the French," to pass unchallenged.

Constant nagging and criticism whenever a pupil recites is, of course, unwise and disheartening and must be avoided. Children, however, like good English. They enjoy hearing it and are keen critics when they are able to distinguish mistakes. Frequent explanations as to the meaning of words will give them a sense of mastery and a pride in their own knowledge which will

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assist materially in their appreciation of the language and their ability to use it.

The problem of the child who talks bad English fluently is balanced by the pupil who possesses a vocabulary of six adjectives, "grand," "good," "brave," "kind," "bad," "awful," which she applies to all events and all men. The girl who said, "Alexander the Great was a nice young man," represents this type of inarticulate youth.

To remedy this weakness, descriptions and characterizations should be constantly employed. Such children should be personally introduced to new words and encouraged to use them. Oral and written exercises which require some imagination should be required of them. Such subjects as a visit to an Indian camp, a scene at a tournament, a Maypole dance in old Virginia, a modern suffrage parade, or character sketches which need vivid word painting of personages like Daniel Boone or Benjamin Franklin or Theodore Roosevelt, present material which may create a wider vocabulary.

The special topic, the class play, the dramatized story, and the class debate are opportunities that may be turned to golden account in emphasizing the use of good English.

In a debate in an eighth grade, one of the

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leaders was sharply criticized by the judges, his classmates, for his slangy and crude language in the rebuttal. "We do not think he treated the class or the subject with proper respect," was their verdict. A dozen lessons in English expression were less effective than this outburst of public opinion. The boy sought eagerly to win back his past prestige, and on his next appearance before the class a dignified special topic, on "What Pan-Americanism Means," was solemnly presented in an English style that greatly impressed his former critics.

Written English requires the same vigilance. The test or written exercise in history should be marked for spelling and English construction as well as for facts.

Why should an account of the Louisiana Purchase be considered perfect when the writer has misspelled Napoleon or Louisiana? Blackboard exercises are excellent opportunities for writing correctly the English language.

Notebooks if used by the class should be corrected and returned by the teacher.

If the pupils realize that a paper handed to the teacher must be neatly written, correctly spelled, and clearly expressed, they are careful in its preparation. On the other hand, the teacher should

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give a sufficient amount of time to a class when they are writing an exercise to enable them to do the work properly and without nervous strain and hurry. A list of questions that cannot possibly be answered during the period assigned causes mental confusion and creates inaccuracy.

Besides the emphasis on spoken and written English in history teaching, the rich treasure house of literature is always open to the history student. Modern textbooks suggest prose and poetry whose use gives color and beauty to the daily lesson.

Material of this kind has been referred to in the chapter on "Outside Readings." Poetry from *Hiawatha* and *The Song of Marion's Men* to Whitman's *My Captain* are the common heritage of every American child. Such a poem as Lowell's *The Crisis* will thrill a class to-day as truly as it did their grandfathers in 1860.

Such stories as *The Man Without a Country*, *The Perfect Tribute*, and *The Crisis* are too well known to need any special mention, yet many children have never read them. The old custom of reading aloud a good story on Friday afternoons is still well worthy of practice, especially if the reading be done by various members of the class.

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Excellent illustrations in the use of good English may be drawn from present-day sources. President Wilson's famous and stirring messages to Congress, Secretary Lane's "The Makers of the Flag," current magazine poetry, and descriptive articles which deal with present-day problems offer material which should be used in every classroom. These not only express ideals of patriotism, they clothe the thought in a noble and stimulating style.

The teaching of good English is largely the teaching of certain habits of thought and expression. No book can teach this entirely. It depends upon the teacher's personality more than any other subject taught in our schools.

## XV

### CONCERNING HOLIDAYS

THE days we keep with honor in our American schools are wonderful days. Christmas Day, which celebrates the most important event in human history; Thanksgiving Day, which gives us a perfect story of courage and pathos, humor and religion; Columbus Day, a memory of the world's most daring adventure; Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays, the story of two lives, crowded with dramatic action, full of passionate excitements, and tragic and triumphant hours; Memorial Day — no other country keeps so tender and beautiful a festival, although in the future all Europe will celebrate many such days; Flag Day, with its color and stirring memories; Fourth of July, — the nation's birthday, — a day sacred to every American, rich with noble pictures of the past and solemn hopes for the greater years to come. These are the chief of our festivals; how shall we celebrate them? Perhaps the first suggestion should be a plea for originality and variety.

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Take for illustration the programs for use on Lincoln's or Washington's birthday.

The child who passes from grade to grade and annually recites the *Gettysburg Address*, and hears about the log cabin and Lincoln's early hardships, will in time weary of these themes and cease to feel any special thrill when the 12th of February arrives. Every teacher should realize that the life of Lincoln is full of extraordinary material. It is possible to present him under many aspects, as pioneer, lawyer, orator, writer, politician, ruler, emancipator, a commander of armies, a master of men. Scenes from this varied career may be used in different classes so that a progressive picture may be created for the child, a picture which portrays the historic Lincoln.

The first three grades might present in different ways the early life of Lincoln: the pioneer existence in Kentucky; the hardships, the struggle for knowledge; Lincoln's love of animals and children; his industry and honesty and thrift could be emphasized.

The fourth and fifth grades, where biography is usually studied, should give the story of his life in simple but dramatic form.

In the sixth, seventh, and eighth years, a more detailed account of the various phases of the

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famous narrative could be considered: the slavery question, the debates with Douglas, Lincoln as a lawyer, Lincoln in the war. Scenes could be given to illustrate the problems which he had to solve; difficulties with generals, the making of the Emancipation Proclamation, the visit to Richmond, and the call on General Pickett's family might be used.

Such books as *The Crisis*, *The Perfect Tribute*, *The Toy Shop*, although fiction, are full of charming bits of description and dramatic scenes that may be easily arranged for the higher elementary grades.

Poems, as Punch's *Apology to Lincoln*, printed a month after his death, is an excellent recitation for an upper grade. A recent poem by Vachel Lindsey, *Lincoln Walks at Midnight*, is very suitable for a present-day celebration.

In an eighth grade or the junior high school a class might use as a new motive the modern conception of Lincoln from the standpoint of the artist. Famous statues might be discussed, as that by Saint-Gaudens in Chicago; the Borghlum statue in Newark, one of the noblest pieces of bronze in the world; and the very recent statue made by George Gray Barnard for the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. The sugges-

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tion that a replica of this statue be erected in London has caused much criticism and discussion. Why is the statue criticized? Does it give us a true conception of Lincoln? Children will enjoy such a discussion, and the various artistic ideals presented by such an exercise are especially helpful to our American school communities. Post-cards and magazine pictures can be obtained of them, and the children will not only talk about Lincoln, but they will also become acquainted with the names and work of America's great sculptors.

Washington has been peculiarly the victim of festival celebrations. Lincoln is usually more vividly and humanly treated than Washington, and the average boy or girl carries from school a genuine affection for him, while they feel for Washington merely a chilly respect.

It is hopeless to combat now the "hatchet story" which is annually told to thousands of children. That this whole episode is absolutely false, and was invented after Washington's death by an almanac writer by the name of Weems, has never been understood by the American people. The myth is so firmly fastened in our educational system that it would be useless to attempt to eradicate it. Hatchets and

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cherry trees can be made by the primary grades in illustrative work, and while the fable is not especially inspiring, it does not injure the memory of the founder of the Republic. The only necessity that should be urged upon the teacher is to present to the children, in later years, the true figure of Washington.

Washington did many things worth studying about besides spending the winter at Valley Forge and crossing the Delaware.

In the first three years the boyhood life may be studied. This would present the picture of the old plantation in the South, the big house and the tobacco fields, the journey to school in the morning, the gallant figure of the little Virginian, his bravery and truthfulness, and happy home life.

In a fourth or fifth grade Washington's part in the French and Indian War might be used. For instance, a little play could be arranged showing his journey to the French forts. The children could dramatize his departure from Virginia, his adventures with the Indians on the way, his reception by the French commanders, his thrilling return across the Ohio to his home. Hand work could be used with such a play; Colonial hats, Indian ornaments, the official letter he car-

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ried, and the French and English flags might be made.

The sixth and seventh grades might study Washington in the Revolution. Here there is a wealth of interesting material: the scene in 1775 when his name was proposed for commander-in-chief of the little Continental Army, scenes with Lafayette and Steuben, Valley Forge and Trenton, episodes of various kinds which show his steadfast courage, his noble outlook on life, his balanced judgment, his unfailing courtesy. His sorrow at Arnold's treason, his treatment of the men who maligned him, as Gates and Lee, are good lessons in generosity and magnanimity. The final hour in Fraunces Tavern, New York City, where he said his tender farewell to the men who had served with him through the long years of war, should not be omitted. Washington's career as President abounds with interest for eighth- or ninth-year pupils.

Original theme work or dramatic characterization could show here his struggle with the problems of his time. A Cabinet meeting with Hamilton and Jefferson discussing their opposing views across the table; Washington reading *The Aurora*, and bitterly indignant over the false and malicious newspaper attacks upon him; Wash-

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ington receiving Genêt and proclaiming his attitude upon Neutrality. These are all possible episodes whose use in the school would emphasize the character of the man, "who," says an English writer, "has made sacred the word 'liberty' throughout the world." "No nobler figure," writes another, "ever stood in the forefront of a nation's history." If this is the British tribute, surely we Americans should make Washington a living figure in our schools.

The plan thus sketched is based upon the theory of progressive class-work in an ordinary public school. In schools where children leave before the upper grades are reached, changes and adaptations would be necessary in using such a program.

In all our school celebrations, the underlying ideas should be individual and social responsibility and patriotic service. A modern Memorial Day celebration should not only portray the heroism of the men who fell during the Civil and Spanish Wars, but it should present the present-day heroes of the nation. Soldiers, sailors, Red Cross nurses and doctors, engineers, etc., workers of every class or rank in the nation's service, should be mentioned, and their devotion understood and praised. A series of tableaux, speeches,

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and recitations could be prepared which would emphasize this spirit of sacrifice. The children should be taught that the belief in duty, the power of self-sacrifice, are not mere words, but vital realities to all true Americans.

If the Pilgrims had been afraid to venture across the sea, if Washington had preferred the comfort and security of Mount Vernon to the dangers and uncertainties of a perilous war, if Lincoln had been less steadfast, patient, and determined as he trod the dark and solitary path that led to a martyr's grave, there would be no America to celebrate in song and festival.

Let us see to it that our children understand that they inherit the responsibility as well as the glory of citizenship. "He alone is base," says Emerson, "and that is the one base thing in the universe, to receive benefits and confer none." No lesson is more important than this one, for "the future of the Republic" is, indeed, "shaped in our schools."

Our national holidays should be spiritual power-houses from which we can generate a vast current which will vivify and ennable the America that is to be.

Music, symbolic pageants, tableaux, plays, and other devices should be introduced into the

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programs. Many school magazines publish helpful suggestions for festival days which a teacher can adopt for her classroom. Children enjoy assisting in the program-making and a committee of pupils will often add original and interesting features to a holiday celebration.

The following brief list of books contains helpful and valuable school material: —

Denton, *Holiday Facts and Fancies*. Educational Publishing Company.

Horsford, *Stories of our Holidays*. Silver, Burdett & Company.

Merington, *Holiday Plays*. Duffield Company.

Olcott, *Good Stories for Great Holidays*. Houghton Mifflin Company.

Patten, *The Year's Festivals*. Dana Estes Company.

Schauffler, *Our American Holidays* (Series). Moffat Yard Company.

Stevenson, *Days and Deeds* (prose and poetry). Doubleday, Page & Company.

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